



Closing Achievement Gaps by Creating Culturally Responsive Schools

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Preface

Our goals, how we teach, what we teach, how we relate to children and each other are rooted in the norms of our culture. Our society's predominant worldview and cultural norms are so deeply ingrained in how we educate children that we seldom think about the possibility that there may be other different but equally legitimate and effective approaches to teaching and learning. In a society with as much sociocultural and racial diversity as the United States, the lack of this wonderment about alternative ways often results in unequal education and social injustice. (Pai, 1990, p. 229)

This book is for those interested in making the journey to a school where all students, regardless of ethnicity or socioeconomic status, truly have an opportunity to learn to high standards. The achievement patterns of various socioeconomic and ethnic groups show that White, middle class students, who mostly share the ethnicity and socio-economic status of their teachers, already have that opportunity, but many students from other ethnic and economic groups do not. Yet, if current trends continue, the number of non-White, non-middle class students will continue to increase while the number of educators who share their ethnicities and cultures will continue to decline.

Minority populations in the United States have dramatically increased and are growing at much faster rates than the general U.S. population. According to projections by the U.S. Census Bureau, one in four Americans is now a person of color. By 2050, people of color will comprise the majority of the population in the United States (www.ksg.harvard.edu/stp307/group4/-NewFiles/futureB.html, 1/26/05). The National Center of Educational Statistics projects that in 2008, 41% of all students will be minorities; however, only 5% of teachers will be minorities. 42% of all public schools will have no minority teachers (Ritter, Trumbull, Kusimo, Busick, Ferguson, & Solano-Flores, 2000).

These data show that it is unlikely schools will be able to employ a significant number of minority teachers whose cultural backgrounds may increase their effectiveness with students of color. Even when minority teachers and administrators are present, they do not necessarily see improving the academic achievement of ethnic minority students as a priority (Howley & Kusimo, 2004).

Geneva Gay (2000), in her review of culturally responsive teaching theories, postulates that students of color are often taught from a Eurocentric framework and that this framework is based on the following:

1. There is the notion that education has nothing to do with cultures and heritages. It is about teaching intellectual, vocational, and civic skills. Students, especially underachieving ones, need to learn knowledge and skill that they can apply in life and how to meet high standards of academic excellence, rather than wasting time on fanciful notions about cultural diversity.

2. Too few teachers have a knowledge and awareness of how teaching practices reflect European American cultural values. They are also not sufficiently informed about the cultures of different ethnic groups.
3. Most teachers want to do the best for all students but mistakenly believe that to treat students differently because of their cultural orientation is racial discrimination. They believe that to be fair to all students they must ignore racial and cultural differences.
4. There is a belief that good teaching is transcendent; it is identical for all students and under all circumstances.
5. There is a claim that education is an effective doorway of assimilation into mainstream society . . . students need to forget about being different and learn to adapt to U.S. society. The best way to facilitate this process is for all students to have the same experiences in school. (p. 21)

Gay postulates that Eurocentric schooling beliefs lead to doubt that children who are not of European ancestry will be successful in school. Also, Ladson-Billings (1994) observes, when teachers embrace “color blindness” or “dysconsciousness,” they do not challenge the status quo and accept the given, (i.e., the failure or success of students based on whether students are advantaged) as inevitable.

Although a number of interactive sociocultural factors such as ethnicity and poverty, a parent’s level of education, perinatal problems (e.g., low birth weight), child-rearing practices, and family support systems play a role in a student’s academic success, there is ample evidence that schools can be successful with students of color and poor students (Haycock, 1998, 2001; D’Amico, 2001; Darling-Hammond & Ball, 1998; Reeves, n.d.; Joyner, Ben-Avie, & Comer, 2004). But for success to occur, people will need to make a conscious decision to *recreate their schools* so that children of color and students from low-income families can reach their academic potential. Without an alternative to the traditional Eurocentric schooling model, educators will likely continue to see high rates of academic failure among children of color and poor children. But we contend that this situation need not continue. We agree with Gay (2000) that teaching is a contextual and situational process that must include “ecological factors, such as prior experiences, community settings, cultural backgrounds, and [the] ethnic identities of teachers and students” (p. 21). A culturally responsive school is organized and operates so as to ensure that all students receive the instruction and support they need to engage intellectually in the teaching and learning process.

Culturally responsive schools encourage students to learn by building in substantive ways on the interests, experiences, knowledge, and skills that majority *and* minority, middle-class *and* low-income students bring to schools and classrooms. Culturally responsive schools contextualize instruction and schooling practices while maintaining academic rigor. They resist the false dichotomy of relevance *or* rigor; rather, they embody relevance *and* rigor.

This book is based on work undertaken over a three-year period in a West Virginia county. The intent of the work was to improve the academic achievement of students in four pilot schools, particularly African American students, many of whom live in families with low incomes. In the third year of the project, research by Hughes, Cowley, Copley, Finch, Meehan,

Burns, Kusimo, Keyes, Orletsky, and Holdzkorn (2005) included extensive classroom observation. Research findings show the following:

- Teachers who were trained in culturally responsive teaching methods and who taught a culturally responsive unit created a more positive classroom learning environment and demonstrated better use of class time, as well as a significantly higher quality of instruction, than teachers in other classrooms studied.
- Trained teachers who taught a culturally responsive unit had the greatest percentage of students on task (exceeding 90 percent) of all classroom groupings studied. These teachers also had the most success engaging students in interactive instruction.
- Students of trained teachers who taught the culturally responsive unit had greater opportunities to learn, were receiving more appropriate instruction, and were more engaged in learning tasks than their peers in other classrooms studied.
- Over time, trained teachers who taught a culturally responsive unit had the greatest adherence to the principles of culturally responsive instruction and showed significant growth in antidiscriminatory teaching.

This book will help educators discover how to change schooling practices and instruction to produce results with all learners. It contains

- a. a discussion of the types of cultural proficiency needed by educators and an introduction to culturally responsive schooling practices—fundamental attributes of culturally responsive schools
- b. a discussion of culturally responsive instruction
- c. issues, tools, and tips for those helping schools transform themselves into culturally responsive learning environments
- d. materials, activities, and processes that school staff can use to begin the process of creating a culturally responsive school
- e. examples of culturally responsive units of instruction for Grades 1-11

The strategies and curriculum materials contained in this book do not increase learning opportunities for children of color at the expense of academic rigor or content standards, nor does one group of students benefit at the expense of other student groups' academic achievement. All of the lessons are both culturally relevant and standards-based. The text, activities, and lessons in this book will help educators understand how to conceptualize and organize schools, classrooms, and instruction to meet the academic and learning needs of all children.

The demographics of the public schools' teaching force are not likely to change dramatically in the near future. Because educators may not have had opportunities to interact and learn from people who are different from themselves in terms of ethnicity or socioeconomic status, they may never fully understand the cultures, histories, and world views of families and children who are different from themselves. However, educators and their students can learn how

to acknowledge the validity and experiences of other cultures and world views. Educators can creatively use this knowledge to strengthen instructional programs in American schools.

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Chapter 1: Schooling Practices and Cultural Proficiency: Building the Foundation for Culturally Relevant Instruction

First one must understand one's own feelings about uncomfortable information. Second the individual must take actions that are in the best interest of the student. (Lindsey, Roberts, & Campbell-Jones, 2005, p. 105)

A culturally responsive school is a school where all children receive instruction that engages them intellectually. We, the authors, accept the proposition by theorists such as Gay (2000), Nuthall (2005), Pai (1990), and Ladson-Billings (1995) that culture and ethnicity are central to the process of schooling. Therefore, we use this lens throughout our work. We conclude that schooling involves not only classroom activities but student-teacher interactions, school-community-parent interactions, extracurricular activities, and the policies and procedures routinely implemented by schools. Based on his work as a primary architect of the Yale University School Development Program (SDP), or "Comer Process," James Comer (2005) states, "We often forget that, for many children, academic learning is not a primary, natural, or valued task. The positive relationships and sense of belonging that a good school culture provide give these children the comfort, confidence, competence and motivation to learn" (p. 758).

The steps needed to create culturally relevant instruction are outlined in a subsequent chapter. However, based on our experiences, changes in schooling practices and teachers' willingness to learn about and acknowledge the role that culture plays in the teaching and learning process must occur if instructional improvements are to be fully realized (Nuthall, 2005).

While there may be support in a school and district to pursue culturally responsive schooling, teachers and administrators may receive both criticism and skepticism from colleagues who do not believe schools need to change to better serve students whose cultures may be different from their own. This chapter provides examples that are illustrative of challenges and situations that are likely to occur as change occurs. These examples are grounded in our work and in the work of others who study and theorize about the relationships among ethnicity, culture, teaching, and learning, including Vygotsky (1978), Gay (2000), Ladson-Billings (1994), Delpit (1995), and Pai (1990).

Our experiences taught us that if we wanted real change to occur, we needed to be curious, to be flexible, and to be willing to deal with the realities of the lives of the students and the staff with whom we worked. According to Lindsay, Roberts, and Campbell-Jones (2005), "Structural changes such as adopting new scheduling patterns or new grouping procedures, or even requiring new curriculum materials, do have the potential to reform instructional practices and thereby improve student learning for some students. However, structural changes alone are insufficient to produce the kinds of deep conversations that have the potential to transform the social and cultural conditions within a school or district" (p. 21). It will also take courage, leadership, and commitment to make the ideas in this book "walk off the pages." A school seeking to become culturally responsive will be in the process of continuously improving,

cognizant that the true goal is to assume the mindset of lifelong learners each day. This chapter explores how schooling practices and cultural proficiency create the foundation for school personnel to engage all learners intellectually.

Leadership Matters: One District's Story

In her qualitative research on two schools' restructuring efforts, Lipman (1994) states that before reform efforts in schools serving students of color can be effective, broader issues of power and dominance within schools will likely need to be addressed. To do this effectively, courageous leadership is needed—leadership that is not afraid to listen to those who challenge school norms and willing to discuss openly to issues some others may be reluctant to address. Lipman, based on her research, states that too often, teachers who are successful with students of color are marginalized because their attitudes, pedagogical practices, and perspectives diverge from school norms. Only courageous school and district leaders, committed to the welfare of students, can ensure that these teachers have the opportunity to influence efforts to improve the academic performance of students of color.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 legislation had not been passed when we began working with a West Virginia school district to help improve the academic achievement of African American students. Although only 12% of the district's 43,000 students were African American, the superintendent strongly felt that the district needed to address the achievement of these students. Negative articles had appeared in the local newspaper about the district's placement of African American students in certain categories of special education classes. An order had been received from the Office of Civil Rights related to that placement. Also, the press had reported the promotion to high school of some middle school African American students who had not successfully completed their middle school coursework.

Not everyone in the district office agreed with the superintendent's decision; in fact, there were district personnel who denied that achievement disparities between African American students and other students existed. At that time, prior to the No Child Left Behind legislation, disaggregated student achievement data were not readily available.

At the superintendent's direction, African American student achievement and disciplinary data were compiled and compared to that of White students. The data indicated disparities between African American students and White students within the district. Academic achievement indicators, including dropout rates, standardized test scores, graduation rates, and advanced placement enrollment data showed that African American students were underachieving.

It took courage to collect, analyze, and report the data to members of the African American community and to the media. The district's leadership did not bury, deny, or ignore the challenges the data presented. The superintendent and the district's management team, along with leaders from the African American community, participated in a series of dialogues, planned and facilitated by the authors, over a 12-month period. During the dialogues, district and

community leaders discussed issues and actions aimed at improving African American students' achievement. Although community members and school personnel did not always agree, the 12 months of dialogues opened lines of communication that both validated and legitimized community concerns. The African American community, though clearly in the minority, had the ear of the top officials in the district. District officials met with community members in local African American churches and community centers. Although most of the meetings occurred during the day, the superintendent and district management staff also met with African American community members during evening hours. The district's commitment was not only to hear, but to act; district officials moved from conversations to action.

Organizing Pilot Teams

As a result of the dialogues, the superintendent asked three schools—two elementary schools and a middle school—to participate in a pilot project to improve African American student achievement. The principal of a high school that was part of the same matriculation pattern volunteered to join the pilot project. The four pilot schools had African American student populations ranging from 28% to 70%. The goal of the project was to see if changes in instructional practices could improve student achievement (how well students perform academically) and attainment (the highest grade students complete in school) for all students but particularly for African American students. Principals identified teams of teachers in these schools to receive training in the design of culturally responsive lessons. These school-based teams that included teachers and administrators were called “pilot teams.” Additionally, efforts to build the capacity of the African American community to support and advocate for quality education continued and were led by community personnel with support from the authors.

During the three years that we worked with the pilot teams, two things became evident: Changes in instructional practices aimed at improving the academic achievement of African American students had to be complemented with changes in schooling practices. Any issue associated with ethnicity or students' culture was an uncomfortable topic for some school and district personnel. It was evident that some school staff, minority and nonminority, needed professional development to help them gain the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and dispositions necessary to explore how ethnicity and culture impact teaching and learning.

Looking at Data

Consider the following story:

One of the activities during the first meeting with pilot school teams involved having team members make observations about student achievement data for their school and the district. The data had been disaggregated by race and gender and participants could see how White male students, White female students, African American female students, and African American male students were performing on the state's assessment. School staff reviewed the data and shared their three most powerful observations. The data clearly showed that African American males' reading and mathematics achievement was lower than all other groups at every

grade level. However, pilot team members avoided making observations that included any reference to race.

The first three schools' observations were generic. They noted, for example, "that all students' achievement declines at the middle school level" and "student achievement begins to improve again at the high school level." Finally, after the third school team shared its observations, a White elementary school principal said, "African American males score lower than all other groups at every grade level." Finally the "elephant's" presence in the room was acknowledged, and its introduction was met with mixed reactions. In fact, an African American participant announced, "If this is about Black kids, I'm out of here!"

By examining schooling practices and developing cultural competency, schools create an environment where all stakeholders—students, family members, and educators—can talk together and support one another as they work to improve the teaching and learning process.

The Importance of Schooling Practices

Historically, schools have practiced a kind of educational triage, providing high quality programs of study for some, adequate programs for others, and substandard and incomplete programs for the rest. Yet the rhetoric of public education has long promised another reality—an educated workforce and citizenry, access to opportunity based on merit and hard work, and a free and equal education for all. (Lieberman & Miller, 1999, p. 8)

The context in which teaching and learning occur has a powerful impact on students' learning (Nuthall, 2005; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995). We use the term *schooling practices* to describe the context in which teaching and learning occur. Schooling practices are the procedures, routines, and protocols a school uses to support and implement its instructional program and interact with students, family members, and the community. Schooling practices are often routinized and may be invisible to the people who implement and experience them. Anthropologist George Spindler (1982) coined the phrase "making the familiar strange" to describe the tasks of trying to document things so familiar they are like air—invisible, yet powerful in their presence or absence. The ability to "make the familiar strange" is particularly important for school staff. According to Spindler, "Much of what we do every day is an indirect expression of submerged cultural understandings (or hidden assumptions) that permeate every dimension of our beliefs and attitudes" (p. 468). Consider the following examples where schooling practices changed after school staff used data to make "the familiar strange":

- **Middle School Mismatch**

In our project, the middle school pilot team compared the math scores of minority students on the state's assessment with student placements in math classes. Normally, students scoring at stanines 7 or above are placed in pre-algebra or algebra I.

However, pilot team members found that 28 African American students scoring at stanine 7 or above were assigned to basic math classes rather than pre-algebra or algebra I. Upon further investigation, they found that the students who had the prerequisite test scores but not the recommendation had all been considered “discipline problems.” Based on their classroom behavior, these students were not recommended for the more rigorous academic course. Then school administrators chose to end basic math classes. Now all students are enrolled in pre-algebra in seventh grade. Those who need additional time to master the content continue pre-algebra in the eighth grade. The rest take algebra I. The principal reported that in the first year, 75% of all math students received course grades of C or higher, and 75% of all African American students received course grades of C or higher.

- **Failure Is Not an Option**

The high school team examined failure rates for ninth-grade students and learned they were unacceptably high, especially for minority and low-income students. They hypothesized that many students need more support than was currently available if they were to adjust to the demands of high school life and work. School personnel successfully sought funding from the district to develop a ninth-grade academy that would offer the attention such students need to succeed. In the academy, there is a 1:12 student-teacher ratio. The academy operates on a modified block schedule with “A” and “B” days. (Students’ instructional time for science, mathematics, English, and social studies alternates between 70 and 30 minutes for each class, depending on whether it is an A day or B day.) Teachers and students have access to a portable computer lab, and the staff is committed to using culturally responsive schooling and instructional practices. Teachers routinely contact parents to inform them of how well students are doing and to discuss any problems that have arisen. Field trips are planned, as well as opportunities for speakers to talk about career opportunities. A community-based organization provides mentoring and counseling for students who have been identified by staff as needing extra support. Currently, the academy is in its first year of operation.

- **An Inclusive Honor Society: A Sense of Belonging**

An examination of the middle school honor society’s membership indicated that no minority students were members, even though several African American students had the prerequisite grades. The principal’s research revealed that African American students, while not discouraged from applying, were not encouraged to apply. The conventional wisdom among African American students was that the honor society was not for them. Rather than lament how unfortunate it was, the principal took steps to ensure that all qualified students were encouraged to apply to the honor society and that all received the appropriate information and support to join. In the first year of this change in practice, eight African American students were inducted into the honor society that had a membership of 31. Since then, the African American membership has become and remains equal to their 33% proportion of the student population in the school.

Schools, in which all children achieve, examine data to make the familiar—their routines, policies, and procedures—“strange.” Leaders within the school use data to challenge the status quo and take action to ensure that practices whose effects are discriminatory do not remain “business as usual.” Schools that help students achieve consistently review their schooling practices to ensure that students’ academic performance and attainment are supported, not hindered. Three examples of schools with a wealth of research on their results are Effective Schools, 90/90/90 schools, and Comer Process or Yale School Development Program (SDP) schools (Cotton, 1995; Reeves, n.d.; Joyner, Ben-Avie, & Comer, 2004).

Effective Schools are schools where all children learn regardless of socioeconomic status or ethnicity. Cotton’s (1995) synthesis of research on Effective Schools states, “The qualities of the school as a whole can either enhance or detract from the learning environment. There are unique characteristics and processes common to schools where all children, regardless of family background, are learning.” The following eight school characteristics and practices were associated with improvements in student performance in Effective Schools:

1. **Efficient planning and clear goals.** The school community emphasizes the importance of learning. Curriculum planning is based on clear goals and objectives and, where appropriate, instruction is integrated. Computer technology is available for instructional support and workplace simulation and preparation for the workplace is a part of the school’s goals.
2. **Validated organization and management practices.** School-based personnel make decisions about school operations to actively promote and support effective instruction. School personnel make sure that school time is used for learning. The school staff establish and enforce clear, consistent discipline policies for all students. The school’s physical environment is comfortable and engaging.
3. **Strong leadership and continuous improvement.** Leaders within the school restructure to attain agreed-upon goals for students. The instructional program is guided by strong leadership and administrators, and school leaders continually strive to improve instructional effectiveness. School leaders provide staff with opportunities for professional development and collegial learning activities.
4. **Positive staff and student interactions.** School leaders hold high expectations for teacher and student performance. Leaders build staff motivation through the use of incentives, recognition, and rewards. Students are recognized by teachers on a schoolwide basis for excellence in academic performance.
5. **Commitment to educational equity.** School personnel accept responsibility for students who are at risk for failure due to family circumstances, substance abuse, or delinquent behavior and provide programs and support for these populations. Administrators and teachers work to challenge the status quo for underachieving student populations with the aim of providing equity in learning opportunities and outcomes. Multicultural activities and education are an important part of the teaching and learning process, and teachers actively support the English language learners

through the use of challenging academic content and English language skills development.

6. **Regular assessment.** The monitoring of student progress is done by teachers and other building-level leaders. Multiple forms of assessment are used to develop an accurate picture of students' learning.
7. **Support programs.** School personnel proactively identify students who are at risk for dropping out of school, engaging in substance abuse, or living in high-risk families. School personnel work collaboratively with the community and family support agencies to assist these students and implement validated programs to address students' risk factors and keep them in school.
8. **Positive relationships with parents and community members.** Parents and community members take an active role in supporting the school's instructional program and the school's governance.

Though all eight of these practices are important, our experiences with the pilot schools lead us to theorize that a school's commitment to equity, support programs, and relationships with parents and community members, as well as positive student-staff interactions, are critical tipping points in determining whether or not schools will meet the needs of African American students and other students of color.

An additional body of research that speaks to the power of schooling practices is Reeves' (2003) research on 90/90/90 schools. 90/90/90 schools are schools where 90% of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, 90% are minority, and 90% score at or above mastery of state tests. Reeves found these schools have five common characteristics or schooling practices:

1. **A strong emphasis and focus on achievement.** There is a "laser-like focus" on student achievement with graphs, charts, and pictures of success displayed prominently throughout the school.
2. **Clear curricular choices.** Instructional time for subjects is not evenly divided among science, social studies, mathematics, reading, and other subjects. More instructional time is spent on reading, writing, and mathematics. Teachers prioritize the teaching of skills in these subjects to improve students' success in other academic endeavors such as science, social studies, study skills, etc.
3. **Frequent assessment and multiple chances for students to show improvement.** Although students may have skills significantly below grade level when they enter a 90/90/90 school, there is a *consistent* message that the penalty for poor performance is not a low grade, followed by a "forced march to the next unit." Instead, students receive multiple opportunities to improve performance. The assessments are constructed and administered by classroom teachers. An ethos of "you can do better next week" pervades the school.

4. **Assessments through writing.** The most common instructional schooling practice is an emphasis on writing. Teachers use information from students' writing to diagnose obstacles to learning or modify instruction. Written work allows teachers to determine if students have vocabulary issues, have misunderstood directions, made reasoning errors, etc. A single scoring rubric applies to all written work. All 90/90/90 schools have an ongoing writing performance assessment program.
5. **External scoring of student work.** Teachers and administrators create and use common assessment practices. Teachers develop a common understanding of proficiency as defined by the scoring rubric. They regularly exchange students' papers with teachers in other schools. An additional level of accountability exists in that principals also exchange papers with other schools and personally evaluate student work.

Teachers and administrators in 90/90/90 schools develop similar techniques without the assistance of externally imposed methods of instruction. They do not rely solely on the use of proprietary, preplanned instructional or school improvement programs but rather grapple with the learning challenges their students present, and find innovative ways to help students learn despite their poverty and challenging life circumstances (Reeves, 2003).

Finally, Comer Process or SDP schools provide additional evidence that all students can achieve, if schools are willing to create or adopt appropriate schooling practices. Joyner, Ben-Avie, and Comer (2004) say, "Over the past three decades, our research and the research of others cited throughout this field guide have consistently found that schools that implement the SDP at high levels tend to experience high levels of student achievement and development" (p. 16). Before schools can identify themselves as certified SDP schools, they must meet a set of criteria over a five-year period. The SDP was founded on the principles of child, adolescent, and adult development. The SDP mobilizes teachers, administrators, parents, and other concerned adults to support students' academic, social, and cultural development. Focusing on more than just students' academic progress, six pathways of students' development are cultivated: physical, cognitive, psychological, language, social, and ethical. The implementation framework for SDP involves a

- **school planning and management** team that develops a comprehensive school plan; sets academic, social, and community relations goals; and coordinates all school activities, including staff development programs
- **student and staff support** team that promotes desirable social conditions and relationships
- **parent team** that involves parents in the school by developing activities through which parents can support the school's social and academic programs (Joyner, Ben-Avie, & Comer, 2004, p. 18)

All teams use three guiding principles. They are No-fault (focusing on problem solving rather than placing blame), Consensus (using dialogues to build common understandings about what is good for children), and Collaboration (ensuring that teams and the principal work together and not against each other).

In Effective, 90/90/90, and Comer Process (SDP) schools, teachers believe students can learn and they build on the strengths and knowledge students bring to school—one of the major attributes of culturally responsive instruction. These teachers and administrators intentionally and consistently create and use practices that support the learning of all of their students; there is no quick fix, no silver bullet. They grapple with the challenges and encourage the strengths that students, their families, and their communities offer. The changes that pilot schools implemented from our research were the result of critical examination of school data by school staff and staff's desire to improve educational opportunities for all students, including African American and low-income students. We offer for your consideration the following list of culturally responsive schooling practices compiled from our experience in working with pilot schools. This list is not meant to be exhaustive but rather offers examples of ways schools can send the message that *everyone* who attends belongs and is valued. These practices imply that the school belongs to students and their families and that the school exists to help them succeed.

1. Visual displays, traditions, music (pep rallies, band and choir performances, and school-sponsored events) reflect the cultures represented in the school and are not insulting to the students (e.g., displaying the Confederate flag, using names like Redskins or Braves for sports teams).
2. When events are scheduled, major cultural holidays are avoided.
3. Information about enrichment opportunities and college/postsecondary training options are not only accessible to all, but school staff intentionally call opportunities to the attention of students and parents who might not otherwise consider them (e.g., Latinos, Native Americans, or low-income students).
4. School staff monitor participation in school-sponsored clubs and sports to assure that participation is diverse and, where participation seems to be limited to certain groups, investigate the reasons (e.g., all-male computer club, all-White honor society, all-Asian math club).
5. School staffs recruit students from all cultural groups who show potential for advanced coursework or gifted classes.
6. School staffs are deliberate in recruiting parent involvement in school activities from all cultures. They use parents/community members as informants about cultures to assure that school practices, procedures, and rituals are not inadvertently offensive (e.g., opening school events with Christian-led prayers when the student body includes Jews and Muslims, creating dress codes that forbid head coverings when cultural norms require them [yarmulkes for Orthodox Jews, scarves for Muslim girls], awarding prizes for individual achievement when the community discourages practices that single out individuals for special attention).
7. School staffs monitor discipline actions and if their effect is disproportionate, investigate the reasons.
8. School staffs review course enrollments to ensure that student participation is ethnically diverse.
9. Professional development experiences are provided for teachers to help them make connections between the content they teach and the learning needs and preferences of students.

The changes a school makes will be shaped by its unique circumstances and driven by the reality of school data. The change process begins with the collection of data on indicators of schooling practices such as course enrollments, participation in clubs, and disciplinary practices. The “It All Begins with Data” process or the Collegial Investigation process described in Chapter 4 can be used for this purpose. Next comes analysis of the data to determine how practices affect different groups of students (low-income, Latino, Asian, rural, etc.). These activities provide a systematic way to collect data on the impact of the school’s focus on equity, the need for student support programs, relationships with parents and community members, and student-staff interactions—areas that most directly impact students of color and their families.

The Case for Culturally Proficient Educators

A broader understanding of the cultural value systems in which children grow up is necessary to improve the education of minority students. If school reforms are to close the achievement gap, they must recognize the role of culture in schooling and the relationships between home culture views of child development and those implicit in schooling practices. (Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch, Greenfield, & Quiroz, 2001, p. 182)

A Cultural Primer

Before discussing the construct of cultural proficiency, it is important to understand some key vocabulary often used by social scientists.

Race and Ethnicity. Race and ethnicity, though often used interchangeably, have distinct meanings. Like other social scientists, we use race to describe a political and social construct that is most often important in societies with a history of oppressing specific groups. For example, in America, Jim Crow laws were implemented to define the rights and privileges accorded to people described by that law as Black. People so described might have a variety of ethnicities, which has to do with their historical, geographical origins. Racial descriptions are based on generalized conceptions of skin color (e.g., Black or White). Two individuals can be of the same race—for example, White—yet of different ethnicities, such as Italian American and Irish American. Additionally, two individuals can share the same ethnicity and still be very different in terms of their culture. For example, Latinos from Mexico and Latinos from Puerto Rico have quite different cultures.

Culture. Zieghan (2001) states that culture is the values, beliefs, and practices shared by a group of people, although social scientists and anthropologists vary on their definitions of what comprises a culture, subculture, or microculture. Lindsey, Robins, and Terrell (2003a) define culture as

everything you believe and everything you do that enables you to identify with people who are like you and that distinguishes you from people who differ from

you. Culture is about groupness. A culture is a group of people identified by their shared history, values, and patterns of behavior. The purpose of a culture is to assist people who are members of a group in knowing what the rules are for acceptable behavior and to provide consistency and predictability in everyday actions. (p. 5)

All individuals inhabit multiple cultures. Culture is an attribute of people, of small groups, of organizations, and of nations; a single person can belong to a multiplicity of cultures, any one of which may be of dominant importance at any given time (Brislin, 1993, as cited in Zieghan, 2001).

Differences between culture, ethnicity, and race. Race designations rely on descriptors of generalized conceptions of skin tone, regardless of an individual's place of origin. Ethnic descriptions are more about the geographical origins of people while culture is about codes of behavior, values, and social norms for interactions. Ethnic groups can have cultures, but so can businesses and organizations. Institutions (e.g., schools) do not have an ethnicity; they do, however, have cultures. Nuthall (2005) asserts, based on his empirical research on teaching and learning over the last 45 years, that "culture shapes our understanding of both the teaching and learning process in ways that have proved extraordinarily difficult to identify and describe" (p. 896).

Language, foods, ways of interacting with friends and family, holidays, and world views are all influenced by culture, which children learn at early ages.

Research about how people develop cultural identities suggests that very young children in preschool are aware of differences among cultural and ethnic groups. (Ogbu, 1992).

After this awareness develops, children begin forming attitudes about their own and other cultural groups. Using information available to them from the adults around them and their own interactions and experiences, young children shape ethnic and cultural identities based on their perceptions of where they (and their group) rank in relation to other ethnic and cultural groups. (Gollnick & Chinn, 1990, as cited in Lindsey, Roberts, & Campbell-Jones, 2005, p. 43).

While groups of people may have a shared culture, within any particular culture or ethnic group, there is a wide variation. Individuals, regardless of their ethnicity, may have experiences, talents, interests, behaviors, and values that differ dramatically. We must remember that there is no monolithic African American, White, Asian, or Latino culture; nor is cultural heritage and cultural inheritance the same. According to The Diversity Kit (The Education Alliance at Brown University, 2001), "Cultural heritage refers to what society as a whole possesses, while a cultural inheritance is what each individual possesses. Each individual inherits some (but not all) of the cultural heritage of the groups they associate with. Living inside a culture allows members to become familiar with the total cultural heritage of the society; however, a single person cannot internalize the entire cultural heritage" (p. 8).

The concept of culture is dynamic and evolves over time. Gender, religion, disability, and sexual orientation may not have been considered dimensions of culture twenty-five years ago; however, gender communication differences, the influence of religious views on decisions and behaviors, and the assumptions that can or cannot be made about people because of their physical ability, sexual orientation, or age are now fields of study (Zieghan, 2001).

As educators seek to connect with families and students, they should be aware of the key areas of cultural dimensions, identified in an ERIC *Digest* by Zieghan (2001), that may impact the process of teaching and learning. Cultures tend to vary along a number of dimensions. The following are among those in which different views and behaviors can lead to misunderstanding and tension:

- **Individualism and Collectivism.** Individualistic cultures generally value the self-reliance, equality, and autonomy of the individual, whereas collectivist cultures tend to value group effort and harmony and knowing one's place within society. For example, mainstream U.S. workplace cultures are often fragmented over the balance between rewarding individual effort and competition, and recognizing and fostering teamwork and cooperation.
- **Monochronic and Polychronic Time.** "M-time" is tangible and can be "saved, spent, wasted, lost, made up, and run out" (Hall, 1983, p. 43). Personal interaction can be sacrificed to scheduling and efficiency. "P-time," however, stresses involvement of people and completion of transactions rather than preset schedules.
- **Egalitarianism Versus Hierarchy.** Believing in fairness and equal opportunities for everyone is critical in more individualistic cultures that often equate hierarchy with rigidity, even if equality is more of a societal ideal than a reality. Conversely, hierarchy may be valued in more collectivist cultures as a means of acknowledging innate differences and inequalities and of facilitating communication by recognizing various social levels using titles and roles.
- **Action Versus Being Orientation.** U.S. culture generally tends to value action, efficiency, and getting to "the bottom line," often downplaying social interactions in the interest of achieving goals. Taking time to discuss and understand complex issues and to appreciate the moment may be more important than precipitously moving to action steps to people coming from a more holistic cultural orientation.
- **Change and Tradition.** "Change" has become the mantra of dominant U.S. society, which looks toward the future and resists an historical perspective. Those coming from cultures that value the lessons of history view the past as an important guide to the present and the future.
- **Communication Styles.** How we communicate is often as important as what we communicate. Depending partially on cultural variables such as nationality, ethnicity, gender, and race (among others), individuals may have a preference for both sending

and receiving messages in styles that are linear or circular, direct or indirect, attached or detached, procedural or personal, and more confrontational in either intellectual or relational terms.

- **Power Imbalances.** In addition to the differences in values and communication styles that contribute to cultural diversity, cultures are stratified by inequities in terms of access to political and economic power. Thus, a culture's relative advantage or disadvantage depends on its position vis-a-vis other cultural groups.

Every school day these dimensions of culture, consciously or subconsciously, influence how individuals within the school interact with one another to create cultural conflicts or to build cultural understanding.

Two final concepts that are very much related to the dimension of power imbalance are “the culture of power” and “White privilege.” Delpit (1995) states that the “culture of power” is “the codes or rules [that] relate to linguistic forms, communicative strategies, and presentation of self; that is, ways of talking, ways of writing, ways of dressing and ways of interacting. The rules of the culture of power are a reflection of the rules of the culture of those who have power” (pp. 24-25). This is particularly important given that the culture of power in most school systems reflects White, middle-class norms. Consider the following example of cultural conflict:

During a break at a professional development session on culture and its impact on schooling, a White, female, middle school principal approached the presenter and asked what she should do about her African American students. The principal explained that in the afternoon a group of African American students gathered in the halls between classes to laugh and tease with each other about the day's activities. Although the principal did not view their behavior as problematic, several of her teachers had complained to her about the students. The presenter asked the principal, “Are they using inappropriate language?” The reply was no. “Are they late for the next class or harassing other students?” the presenter queried. Once again the principal's response was no. “Has the behavior caused fights or arguments?” the presenter asked. “Oh no,” the principal replied. They just seem genuinely glad to see one another. In fact, I admire their energy, but some of the teachers don't like them congregating in the halls and feel they are just too loud.”

The way in which the African American students were interacting with each other was not against school rules but merely uncomfortable for some teachers. Hence, from the teachers' perspective, it presented problematic behavior. Were students in the example guilty of problematic behavior, or did the teachers' reactions reflect a cultural conflict?

Finally, Peggy McIntosh (1988) has defined what she terms “White privilege,” or the experience of being White in America. McIntosh states,

I have come to see White privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain

oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks. Describing White privilege makes one newly accountable, so one who writes about having White privilege must ask, having described it, what will I do to lessen or end it?

The concept of White privilege is important because it helps explain why educators, the majority of whom are White, may have difficulty understanding the challenges students of color and their families face that are solely attributable to race or ethnicity. For most White, middle-class educators, their race (skin tone) and ethnicity (historical, geographical origin), is an unearned asset, not a liability. Ladson-Billings (1994) states,

My own experiences with White teachers, both preservice and veteran, indicate that many are uncomfortable acknowledging any student differences and particularly racial differences. Thus some teachers make such statements as “I don’t really see color, I just see children” or “I don’t care if they’re red, green, or polka dot, I just treat them all like children.” However, these attempts at colorblindness mask a “dysconscious racism” and “uncritical habit of mind that justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order of things as given. This is not to suggest that these teachers are racist in the conventional sense. They do not consciously deprive or punish African American children on the basis of their race, but at the same time they are not unconscious of the ways in which some children are privileged and others are disadvantaged in the classroom.” (pp. 31-32)

Cultural Proficiency

Cultural proficiency has been defined as “Knowing how to learn and teach about different groups in ways that acknowledge and honor all people and the groups they represent” (Lindsey, Roberts, Campbell-Jones, 2005, p.74). Individuals who are culturally proficient have behaviors that enable them to effectively interact in a culturally diverse environment. The culturally proficient educator is aware of how a person’s cultural and ethnic presentation may offend some, yet be accepted and valued by others. For example, members of Hip Hop culture call one another “Dog” as a fond greeting. In other cultural contexts, greeting someone by saying, “Hey, Dog” would be offensive. Culturally proficient educators acknowledge the legitimacy of diverse communication and social interaction patterns, and they either use them or at least react to them appropriately to enhance the effectiveness of their communications with students and their families.

The following cultural proficiency continuum, developed by Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, (2003), describes the range of behaviors that may be present within schools:

- **Cultural destructiveness:** negating, disparaging, or purging cultures that are different from your own

- **Cultural incapacity:** elevating the superiority of you own cultural values and beliefs and suppressing cultures that are different from you own
- **Cultural blindness:** acting as if differences among cultures do not exist and refusing to recognize any differences
- **Cultural precompetence:** recognizing that lack of knowledge, experience, and understanding of other cultures limits your ability to effectively interact with them
- **Cultural competence:** interacting with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value their differences that motivate you to assess your own skills and expand your knowledge and resources and that, ultimately, cause you to adapt your relational behavior
- **Cultural proficiency:** honoring the differences among cultures and viewing diversity as a benefit, and interacting knowledgably and respectfully among a variety of cultural groups

At one end of the cultural continuum, there will be conflict and blame and at the other, empathy and learning. In this project, the dialogues between school personnel and African American community members were invaluable. They provided a forum for honest conversations about the roles race, culture, and ethnicity play in teaching and learning. Although educators and community members involved in the dialogues did not always agree, community members gained a deeper understanding of the “culture of power” (the school system), and school system personnel gained a firsthand appreciation and understanding of African American community members’ deep concerns regarding the education of their children.

The Importance of Cultural Proficiency

As America becomes more and more ethnically diverse, there is a growing acknowledgement that cultural proficiency is important for teachers. The Educational Research Service has identified 10 key trends it believes will have significant implications for elementary and secondary schools in the United States. One of these trends is a dramatic shift in America’s student population by 2050. (See Figure 1.). Demographers predict the United States will become a nation of minorities. According to Marx (2002), non-Hispanic Whites represent 64.2% of the 18-and-under population; however, by 2050, that percentage is projected to shrink to 46.2. Hispanic children, now representing 16.2% of this population, will increase to 30.5%, while Asians, now at 4.2%, will grow to 9.2%. The percentage of African American and Native American children will remain about the same, with African Americans declining from 14.5% to 13.3%, and Native Americans dropping from 1.0% to 0.9% (Marx, 2002).

Furthermore, the National Center for Educational Statistics reports that by the year 2008, 41% of all students will be minorities, but only 5% of teachers will be minorities.(as cited in Ritter, et al, 2000, p. 5). As important as cultural proficiency is for educators, it is equally important for the students’ they teach.

The world of work awaiting today’s students will be ethnically and culturally diverse. The ability to understand and interact with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds will be an invaluable skill in the workplace. Technology has made the marketplace global, and the

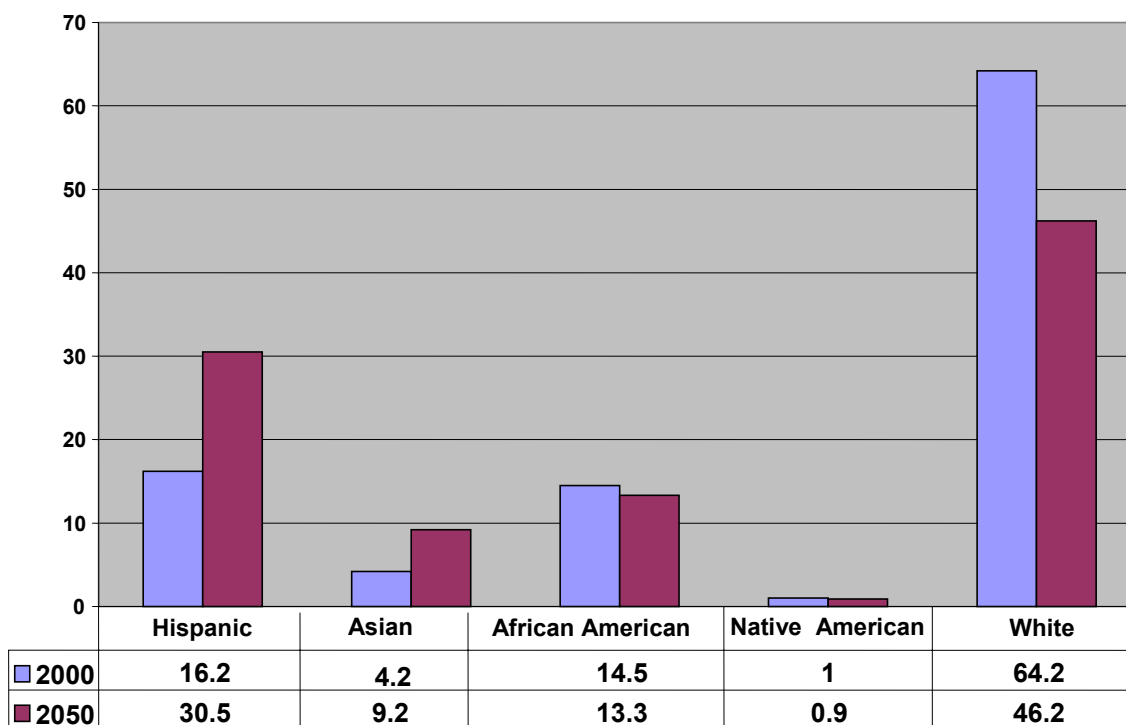


Figure 1. Student Population 2000 vs. 2005

changing demographic picture in America means that everyone will likely have opportunities to interact with people who come from ethnically diverse populations. Increasing the number of teachers of color may give students school-based role models with whom to identify or from whom to learn; however, there is no guarantee that teachers of color will be any more culturally proficient than their White peers.

Teacher induction programs are increasingly trying to teach culturally sensitive pedagogy (Foster, Lewis, & Onafowora, 2005). But there is far to go before all new teachers have received adequate preparation, and there is also a need for professional development to help in-service teachers become culturally proficient.

What's in a name? A lone, African American student in a high school class with a White instructor asked the instructor politely not to refer to her as a Negro but to use the term African American. The teacher replied, "In my day, we called them Negro," and she continued to refer to the student as Negro. The African American student went to the guidance counselor for help and asked, "How can I get her [the teacher] to stop doing this? I've asked her several times, but she just keeps doing it."

According to Sheets (1996), "A sense of individual and group identity is related to normal emotional and cognitive development, so when this process is interfered with, students are more likely to fail in school. . . . Members of the dominant culture [White] whose identity development is less likely to be interfered with [a White privilege] may not understand the

complex process of identity development for students from minority or mixed ethnic backgrounds” (The Education Alliance at Brown University, p. 13).

Implications for Practice

A culturally proficient educator acknowledges students’ cultural heritages and views them as assets. Zeichner (1996) warns that generalized studies about cultures can lead to stereotypes, ignoring the fact that no two individuals from any culture are exactly alike. Consequently, engaging solely in text-based research about students’ cultures is not the best way to learn about students and their cultures. The alternative is to engage in amateur ethnographic inquiry about one’s own students” (Heath, 1983, as cited in *The Diversity Kit*, The Education Alliance at Brown University, p. 41). Students and their families are the experts on their own lives. They are authentic sources of data about their own values and cultures. Educators can use home visits, conversations with community members, consultation with other teachers, observations of students in and out of school, or conversations with students as tools to learn about students and their culture (Villegas, 1993). Sometimes the cultures of students and teachers are naturally compatible; at other times, they are not. If there is cultural dissonance, educators can work to overcome it.

When teachers and students bring different cultural frames of reference and communication styles to their interactions, learning may not occur because the teacher’s and student’s ways of forming and displaying knowledge may be quite different (Ballenger, 1999; Delpit, 1995; Gallas, 1994). McIntyre, Rosebery, and Gonzalez (2001) say, “Children from middle-class homes, where the funds of knowledge correspond nicely to those of school, experience much less discontinuity. . . . Right from the start they know what to do and what to say in order to have their ideas heard and their activities valued by the teacher and the school” (pp. 3-4). Teachers can, however, develop the capacity to recognize the abilities and learning needs of their particular students, even when the students do not share the teacher’s ethnicity, social class, or cultural heritage. As noted in *The Diversity Kit* (The Education Alliance at Brown University), “While this is not an easy task, providing instruction that draws on students’ ways of knowing will have a positive impact on student learning” (p. 18). “Teachers must have and use data about their students to guide pedagogical decisions about which aspects of practices are most suited to their children” (McIntyre, Rosebery, & Gonzalez, 2001, p. 116).

Can teachers who are not actively seeking to become culturally proficient design lessons to engage the diverse student populations they teach? Can schools modify their schooling, curriculum, and instructional practices to meet the challenges and develop the assets that ethnically and culturally diverse students bring to school if they do not understand their students’ cultures? An examination of current student achievement indicators says no. Students of color and low-income students continue to lag behind their middle-class, White peers and Asian peers on NAEP assessments and ACT and SAT performance.

Elliott and Schiff (2001), based on their experiences working with schools to provide staff development, state, “Our nation’s schools show a pattern of differential achievement across racial and economic groups. Bias and prejudice, whether or not teachers are aware of it, affect

teaching, learning, curriculum and assessment. Only by transforming teachers' attitudes and developing culturally sensitive and relevant ways to interact with and instruct students will we see the changes we want in student learning and close achievement gaps" (p. 39). Culturally proficient educators in schools with effective schooling practices are capable of transformative learning, a type of learning that *alters* destinies and obliterates achievement gaps, based on empirical and qualitative research by the Education Trust (a nonprofit organization, the mission of which is to make schools and colleges work for all young people they serve). Haycock and Robinson (2001) state, "Teachers who consistently get results with all groups of students clearly know their subjects and how to teach them. But they also demonstrate what we have come to think of as a kind of 'cross-cultural competence'. [They] see the range of student abilities, cultures, and races in their classrooms as challenges, not impediments, and constantly examine their own attitudes about race, class, and culture, and actively work to keep from applying stereotypic ideas that limit their expectations for student achievement" (p. 18).

Chapter 4 suggests a number of activities, processes, and resources to help you and your school begin the cultural proficiency journey. We encourage you to select those that will meet the needs of your school staff.

Discussing values and beliefs can be emotional. Proceed with great sensitivity, but proceed nonetheless. Delpit (1995) posits that "teachers are in an ideal position . . . to attempt to get all of the issues on the table in order to initiate true dialogue. . . . I suggest that the results of such interactions may be the most powerful and empowering coalescence yet seen in the educational realm—for all teachers and for all students they teach" (p. 46).

Do not expect that all teachers or administrators will "buy in" to the need to develop cultural competency. Some may initially regard actions to develop cultural proficiency as a distraction from teaching. Indicators of student achievement should guide your decisions about whether and how quickly you proceed. Indeed, as Nuthall (2005) says, "So long as we remain unaware of the extent to which our hidden culture determines how we practice, think about, and do research on teaching, attempts at reform are likely to be ineffective and we will remain locked in a system that inevitably produces failure academically and socially" (p. 896). If indicators of low student achievement are associated with students' particular cultural or ethnic groups, that fact is an indicator that school staffs need to develop the skills, knowledge, and pedagogical practices that are necessary to improve students' achievement. In order to develop those skills, knowledge and pedagogical practices, they will also need to engage in courageous, truthful conversations about race, ethnicity, and teaching and learning. Cultural proficiency is too important to leave to chance. We all use cultural lenses, both organizational and personal, to filter our expectations of and assumptions about others.

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Chapter 2: Culturally Responsive Teaching

[School reform literature] suggests that when schools succeed with culturally diverse and socioeconomically disadvantaged students, there exists a powerful belief system of high expectations that rejects deficit assumptions about children and their cultures, abilities, and life circumstances. (Belinda Williams, *Closing the Achievement Gap*, p. 190)

Introduction

The No Child Left Behind Act legislation enacted by Congress in 2001 proposes to increase achievement and to eliminate achievement gaps for all students. Because the achievement gap is a complex phenomenon, educators need to understand that (a) “minorities are growing in number in U.S. public schools and (b) economic inequality is linked to race and class in the United States” (Manning & Kovach, 2003, p. 27). A culturally responsive approach to education acknowledges the strengths that minority and socioeconomically disadvantaged learners bring to the classroom; that is, they are culturally different from their White middle-class peers; they have unrecognized abilities and underdeveloped potential; and they are engaged, self-motivated, and resilient (Williams & Newcombe, 1994). When culturally responsive instruction occurs, teachers draw upon students’ home cultures and experiences as resources for teaching and learning instead of viewing them as barriers to education (Gay, 2000). To accomplish this, teachers must develop cultural competence as well as skill in designing curriculum, instruction, and assessment that meet the needs of all populations of students, including ethnic and racial minorities, English language learners, special education students, and students who are economically disadvantaged.

Culturally responsive instruction, a component of a culturally responsive, high-performing school—one in which all populations of students are succeeding—is a teaching method that can help close achievement gaps. Culturally responsive instruction is supported by a growing body of research, both quantitative and qualitative (see, for example, Irvine & Armento, 2001; numerous studies conducted by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence, such as *Five Standards of Effective Pedagogy and Student Outcomes*, 2004; and Darling, 2005). Inherent in these studies is the finding that culturally responsive teaching includes (a) the use of curriculum that is both rigorous and relevant to students’ lives and (b) the teacher’s desire and ability to build trusting relationships with students and families that extend beyond the classroom.

What Is Culturally Responsive Teaching?

Educational researchers, theorists, and writers use the term *culturally responsive* interchangeably with several terms such as *culturally relevant*, *culturally appropriate*, or *multicultural*. Culturally responsive teaching is based on the theory that culture is central to

student learning. This sociocultural approach to teaching is grounded in the work of theorists and researchers in education psychology such as Lev Vygotsky, John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Jerome Bruner, among others. According to Ladson-Billings (1994), who defined the theory and practice of culturally responsive pedagogy through her study of exemplary teachers of African American students, culturally responsive instruction is “an approach that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (p. 18). Such an approach suggests that to facilitate learning, teachers need to value, become familiar with, and leverage the cultural experiences of their students. Also, teachers should build on students’ funds of knowledge by “using the knowledge and skills students bring to the classroom as a foundation for new learning” (p. 124).

In culturally responsive classrooms, teachers practice three R’s of instruction. First, they ensure that curriculum is *rigorous* by teaching to the highest standards, and they hold high academic and personal expectations for each student. This means designing standards-based instruction based on the core curriculum for all students and incorporating learning activities that challenge students to use higher-order thinking skills. It also means that teachers provide supports to help all students learn by assuring “equitable access to necessary learning resources and sufficient opportunities to learn for each child, and making instructional adaptations that match and build upon the student’s knowledge, experiences, skills, and beliefs” (Irvine & Armento, 2001, p. 23).

Yet, rigor is not enough. The curriculum must be *relevant* to students’ lives so that it motivates them to learn. Relevance may be acquired in several ways. For example, curriculum materials can reflect the cultural diversity within the classroom. Students can have some voice and choice in the ways in which they acquire and demonstrate knowledge and skills. Classroom learning experiences can connect to students’ everyday experiences, and classroom learning can be integrated with out-of-school experiences and knowledge of life inside the community (National Education Association, 2005). Also, teachers can know students well enough that they can use personal and culturally relevant examples to illustrate content ideas (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto, 2000).

Finally, a culturally responsive teacher develops caring, trusting *relationships* with all students and their families (Gay, 2000). These relationships extend beyond the classroom and into the community. Diero (1996) calls this form of caring and openness “effective connection” with students. When students know that teachers care about them personally and are concerned about their academic progress, they are more willing to learn. However, culturally appropriate caring may look different for different groups of students. For example, European American and Asian American students may enjoy having their success acknowledged publicly, but students from other cultures may be uncomfortable with recognition that separates them from their peers.

Minority and economically disadvantaged students often have abilities that have not been recognized or fully developed. Yet, they often show resilience, an ability to bounce back from adversity. Resilience is a set of qualities and circumstances such as social competence, problem-solving skills, critical consciousness, autonomy, and a sense of purpose and future that foster success despite risk and adversity (Bernard, 2003). Caring teachers can build on these strengths and help develop them in less resilient students by conveying high expectations and providing

opportunities for students to actively participate in learning (National Education Association, 2005).

What Research Says About the Characteristics of a Culturally Responsive Teacher/Classroom

Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, and Yamauchi (as cited in Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence, 2004) propose five standards for effective pedagogy, grounded in a sociocultural perspective of teaching and learning, as critical for improving learning outcomes for all students, and especially for those at risk of academic failure due to cultural, linguistic, or economic factors. Their research has examined teachers' use of the standards, both separately and in combination, with a variety of methods including studies of multiple classrooms, short-term randomized designs and quasi-experimental single classrooms, and longitudinal studies of entire schools. The first standard is to facilitate learning through joint productive activity among teacher and students. The second standard is to develop language and literacy across the curriculum. The third standard is to contextualize teaching and the curriculum in the experiences and skills of students' homes and communities. The fourth standard is to teach complex thinking through challenging activities requiring the application of content knowledge to achieve an academic goal, with clear standards and systematic feedback on performance. The fifth standard is to teach dialogically, using planned, goal-directed instructional conversations between a teacher and a small group of students. These five standards are analogous to AEL/Edvantia's principles of culturally responsive instruction, described in the Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching section of this chapter.

Consistent findings from correlational, quasi-experimental, and true experimental designs have documented a systematic relationship between use of Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, and Yamauchi's five standards for effective pedagogy and a broad range of affective, behavioral, and cognitive indicators of improved student performance. For example, in classrooms of English language learners (ELL) in which the Five Standards were used moderately or only slightly, students spent more time on task, perceived greater cohesion in the classroom, and perceived themselves as better readers having less difficulty with their work than students in classrooms where the standards for effective pedagogy were not used at all. In a quasi-experimental design with groups of eighth-grade American Indian students randomly assigned to either Transformed (Five Standards) or Traditional (Whole Class) mathematics instruction, students in the Transformed classes reported improved attitudes toward mathematics and evidenced more conceptual learning on tests at the end of the math unit and higher retention of unit content two weeks later. In a series of true experimental designs, researchers found that students with varying levels of English proficiency who were taught using instructional conversations (Standard 5) demonstrated greater understanding of story theme than students taught using direct instruction. Students taught using both instructional conversations and contextualization (Standard 3) showed significantly better reading comprehension and thematic understanding than students taught using either instructional conversations or contextualization separately. These findings are presented in studies by Padron & Waxman; Hilberg, Tharp, & DeGeest; and Saunders and Goldenberg (as cited in Doherty, Hilberg, Pinal, & Tharp, 2003).

Additionally, Doherty et al. (2003) describe two studies they conducted that examine the influence of the Five Standards for Effective Pedagogy on student achievement gains.

Study 1, conducted in a public elementary school serving predominantly low-income Latino English Language Learners (ELL), found that higher use of the standards by teachers reliably predicted student achievement gains on SAT-9 tests of comprehension, reading, spelling, and vocabulary. Further analysis found teachers' use of the standards reliably predicted gains in English language achievement when English was the language of instruction. Study 2 found that achievement gains in comprehension, reading, spelling, and vocabulary were greatest for students whose teachers had transformed both their pedagogy and the organization of instructional activities as specified by the Standards for Effective Pedagogy model. These teachers used the standards extensively, both directly at a teacher center and indirectly through multiple, simultaneous, diversified learning activities. (p. 1)

A number of studies reviewed by Darling (2005) examine students' perspectives on teacher practices. For example, two studies found that when students talked about their views of effective teachers, they centered on three themes: (a) positive relationships between teachers and students affected academic achievement, (b) teachers' responsiveness to students' personal lives generated positive feelings that led to increased academic effort, and (c) students preferred teachers who allowed them to express their own ideas when completing classroom assignments and engaging in classroom discussions. These findings are presented in studies by Slaughter-Defoe & Carlson and Spencer & Markstrom-Adams (as cited in Darling, 2005).

African American students, in particular, have voiced their opinions about what makes a good teacher. Howard (2002) details findings from an ethnographic case study that examined African American elementary and secondary students' descriptions of teaching practices and learning environments within urban contexts. The students identified three central teaching strategies that had a positive affect on student effort, engagement, and achievement. The three key strategies are (a) teachers who establish family, community, and home-like characteristics, i.e., "making school seem like home" (p. 431); (b) teachers who establish culturally connected caring relationships with students, i.e., "a display of caring that does not require students to abandon their cultural integrity" (p. 434); and (c) teachers who use certain types of verbal communication and affirmation, e.g., "firm or strict, but supportive" (p. 438).

Ladson-Billings (1994) defines the characteristics of culturally responsive teachers through her work with exemplary teachers of African American students in terms of their conceptions of self and others. She describes a culturally responsive teacher as one who

- sees herself as an artist, and teaching as an art
- sees herself as part of the community, and teaching as giving something back to the community, and encourages students to do the same
- believes all students can succeed

- helps students make connections between their community, national, and global identities
- sees teaching as “pulling knowledge out”—like “mining” (p. 34)

An ethnographic study of low-achieving students conducted by Lee (1999) described structures and practices identified by African American and Latino students as contributing to their underachievement. The students stated that (a) teacher-centered classrooms, (b) perceived racism and discrimination patterns and expectations, and (c) lack of personalized, caring teacher-student relationships were contributing factors to their school failure.

Likewise, Larke (1992), drawing on his studies of preservice and in-service teachers, purports that teachers who have had prior experience with culturally diverse students exemplify four factors that identify them as an “effective multicultural teacher”: (a) sensitivity and cultural congruence; (b) knowledge of students’ backgrounds; (c) awareness of learning styles; and (4) recognition of racism, classism, and sexism.

The research cited here provides support for using pedagogy that addresses the needs of culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students.

Is Culturally Responsive Teaching Different from “Good Teaching”?

A number of studies indicate there are differences between culturally responsive teaching and “good teaching” that does not take students’ culture into account. Culturally responsive teaching is good teaching; however, good teaching is not necessarily culturally responsive. Culturally responsive teaching includes all that is considered good teaching, but also acknowledges the student’s cultural background, builds on the student’s experiences, and affirms his or her cultural identity (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Williams & Woods, 1997; Zeichner, 2003). Although good teaching includes factors such as having strong content knowledge and aligning the taught and tested curricula, these factors may be present in a classroom where the teacher does not demonstrate cultural competence (i.e., does not value and affirm the students’ cultural identity or build on the knowledge and skills students bring to the classroom). When teachers do not value or meet the cultural needs of their students, it is difficult for teachers to develop cross-cultural relationships with the students. Therefore, a disconnect can occur that may hinder students’ academic and social progress (Nieto, 1992). The disproportionate numbers of culturally diverse students referred to special education has in part been attributed to this disjuncture between the teacher’s standard pedagogy and the learning needs of students who are part of the changing demographics in our nation’s schools (Losen & Orfield as cited in Villa and Thousand, 2005).

Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching

What does a culturally responsive classroom look like? What are teachers and students doing? How do teachers know whether or not they are culturally responsive?

Theoretical Foundations

Culturally responsive teaching has a strong theoretical base that includes some familiar characteristics identified in the teaching effectiveness research. Some examples of these effective strategies include

- connecting to students' prior knowledge and cultural experience
- setting high expectations
- instituting positive classroom climates and positive relationships with parents and community
- understanding students' cultural knowledge and experiences and selecting appropriate instructional materials
- helping students find personal meaning and purpose in what is to be learned
- using interactive teaching strategies
- allowing students to participate in planning instructional activities
- using culturally familiar speech and events
- helping students construct meaning by organizing, elaborating, and representing knowledge in their own way (Irvine & Armento, 2001, p. 10).

Note the similarities between research on characteristics of effective teaching and the principles of culturally responsive teaching identified by The Education Alliance at Brown University (www.knowledgeloom.org).

- Communication of high expectations
- Active teaching methods
- Teacher as facilitator
- Positive perspectives on parents and families of culturally and linguistically diverse students
- Cultural sensitivity
- Reshaping the curriculum
- Culturally mediated instruction
- Student-controlled classroom discourse
- Small group instruction and academically related discourse

AEL/Edvantia used these nine principles of culturally responsive teaching in developing a professional development curriculum designed to help teachers increase the achievement of African American children in four schools in Kanawha County, West Virginia. Each month, a team of teachers at each school learned about one of the principles through materials and examples provided by an AEL/Edvantia facilitator. Then each teacher designed a lesson for their students that incorporated that principle. After teaching the lesson, the teachers met with the facilitator for reflection about their implementation of the principle, students' engagement with the lesson, and the quality of student work that resulted from the application of the principle.

As teachers progressed through the principles, they identified marked similarities between some of the principles. For example, they found it difficult to distinguish between cultural sensitivity and culturally mediated instruction, or active teaching methods and teacher as

facilitator. At the conclusion of a year of working with the teacher teams, facilitators revised the principles of culturally responsive instruction, which incorporated the nine principles identified by The Education Alliance as well as the five standards for effective pedagogy identified by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence, and principles suggested by other writers such as Ladson-Billings (1994), Nieto (2000), Irvine & Armento (2001), and Gay (2002).

AEL/Edvantia's Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Following are AEL/Edvantia's principles of culturally responsive instruction, including a definition, explanation, and examples for each principle. AEL/Edvantia has incorporated these principles into culturally responsive curriculum units for Grades 1 through 11. These units are included on a compact disk that accompanies this book.

- **High expectations:** *School staff consistently communicate that they believe in students' ability to succeed.* When teachers hold high personal and academic expectations for students, they collectively and individually assume responsibility for student learning. Teachers communicate this belief to students and parents through the use of a rigorous standards-based curriculum and instructional materials for all students. They also apply a "no excuses" policy for student learning that includes practices such as providing important, visible, and attainable goals; using teaching strategies that build on learners' experiences; interacting with parents and community members; providing additional time for instruction; frequently monitoring individual student progress; having adequate learning resources for all students; and encouraging students to persevere in attaining academic success (Williams, 2003, p. 191). Holding high expectations for all students also involves teaching complex thinking through challenging activities requiring the application of content knowledge to achieve an academic goal, with clear standards and systematic feedback on performance (Doherty et al., 2003, p. 1).

The principle in action. In an activity in AEL/Edvantia's fourth-grade curriculum unit, "Organisms, Organisms Everywhere," students learn about the work of botanists, zoologists, and geologists. Then they apply that knowledge as they assume the roles of botanists, zoologists, and geologists and work in teams to identify and classify the organisms found in their school yard.

- **Cultural competence:** *Educators value students' culture, beliefs, and families, and incorporate those in school and classroom practices.* When educators exhibit cultural competence, they contextualize instruction in the experiences and skills of students' homes and communities (Doherty et al. 2003, p. 1). They also maintain ongoing dialogue with students, parents, and community, and they include parents and community members in school and classroom activities. Thus, they recognize a variety of knowledge, skills, and values of the cultures and ethnicities represented in the classroom and incorporate them into the curriculum. Furthermore, educators extend their relationships with students and families beyond the classroom and school and into the community. Perhaps most important, they help students learn to be

bicultural: that is, they help students learn to honor and embrace the best of their community's culture, language, and values, while understanding and successfully navigating the cultures of others and learning the English language (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Gay, 2002, Doherty et al., 2003).

The principle in action. In AEL/Edvantia's first-grade curriculum unit, "We Are Family," students develop understanding of cultural diversity by studying differences and similarities in families around the world. One activity is an interview with a person from a different culture, for which students develop the interview questions. After the interview, students complete a Venn diagram indicating how that person's culture is similar to and different from theirs. Students also learn about how differences in cultural traditions can cause conflicts, and they learn how to resolve these kinds of conflicts through a role-playing activity.

- **Active teaching:** *Teachers facilitate learning by engaging students in a variety of activities, including instructional conversations.* "Key to this approach is the recognition that learning takes place through a dialectical process of active participation, and not just within an individual's mind" (Bennett, Bridglall, Cauce, Everson, Gordon, Lee, Mendoza-Denton, Renzulli, and Stewart., 2004, p. 12). When teachers use active teaching strategies, their role changes from primarily a conveyor of knowledge to a facilitator of learning. As facilitators, teachers design instruction so that students play an active role in shaping curriculum and instruction. Instead of expecting students simply to soak up information provided by the teacher, teachers help students to construct their own understanding about the curriculum content. Teachers facilitate learning through joint productive activity in which they and the students work together on common goals such as selecting topics/issues to study, generating questions about the topics they study, and deciding how they will find answers to their questions (Doherty et al., p. 1). An active classroom is characterized by a variety of instructional strategies that require collaboration and social discourse between teacher and students, including reading, writing, and speaking activities; hands-on/interactive activities; cooperative learning; student-generated projects; and problem-based learning.

The principle in action. AEL/Edvantia's eighth-grade curriculum unit engages students in building a mousetrap-powered race car. Students work in teams to design a car, a container for the car, and a sales presentation that explains why their car design and container should be accepted by a toy company. When the car designs are completed, a race is held to determine which car is the most aerodynamic and accurately constructed. Parents and community members serve as judges. The teachers provide requirements for the car, container, and sales presentation before the students begin work and then serve as facilitators who monitor and assist the teams. Students take a pretest on the skills required to complete the task, then they work in cooperative groups of four (one student who has demonstrated mastery of the skills, two students who are proficient, and one who is developing proficiency). After completing the required products, students complete a posttest on the math, science, and language arts skills taught in the unit.

- **Student-controlled discourse:** *Teachers create classrooms that invite dialogue among students and between students and teachers that forms a basis for instruction.* In culturally responsive classrooms, teachers treat students as intellectual leaders, encouraging the formation of a community of learners where teacher and students learn together. They engage in instructional conversations with small groups of students, and they view students' experiences and verbal and nonverbal communication styles as funds of knowledge that can be used in the teaching and learning process (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Gay, 2002; Doherty, et al., 2003). For example, teachers encourage students to tell stories or provide examples from their experience that relate to the topic under study. Teachers design group activities that allow students to apply what they learn. They also use classroom assessments that provide choice for students and encourage students to communicate with authentic audiences, such as their peers and community members.

The principle in action. In AEL/Edvantia's seventh-grade curriculum unit, "May the Force Be with You," students learn about First Amendment rights and the power of persuasion. As students discuss various protests and civil rights movements in the United States, they compare their constitutional rights such as freedom of speech, press, and religion to those in another country. They also identify a cause they believe in and design an ad campaign or write a persuasive speech to promote their cause. During the unit activities, students select pieces of their work to place in a portfolio that exhibits their learning and best work during the unit as their final assessment.

- **Relevant curriculum and instructional practices:** *Teachers develop challenging curriculum and instructional practices that are relevant to students' lives.* When teachers design relevant curriculum and instructional practices, the classroom learning resources are multicultural and the curriculum content reflects diverse cultural, ethnic, and gender perspectives. Teachers connect concepts and skills across the curriculum and with the world beyond school and design learning activities that develop higher-order thinking skills (Drake & Burns, 2004). Teachers provide variety in the ways in which students acquire and demonstrate mastery of knowledge and skills, (e.g., reading/writing/graphic representation, movement, performance, projects, portfolios). However, they help students develop competence in the language and literacy of instruction and in the academic disciplines through extended reading, writing, and speaking activities (Doherty et al., 2003). They also ensure that classroom management practices facilitate student interaction and engagement with instruction. Instruction begins with assessment or activation of students' prior knowledge and provides scaffolding or enrichment appropriately for individual students (Bennett et al., 2004).

The principle in action. AEL/Edvantia's sixth-grade unit includes activities designed to help students gain knowledge about their personal and cultural identity. For example, in language arts, students learn about Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and complete an inventory to identify the ways in which they "are smart." Then, in mathematics class, students graph the data from the inventory to create a class profile of their intelligences. They also measure their height and "wing

span” and tally and graph that data for individual, gender, and class profiles. In the math activities, students also learn how to find mean, mode, and median. Science activities include fingerprinting and determining dominant genetic traits of each student. Students in language arts and social studies classes read biographies or autobiographies about famous African Americans and others who are leaders in various fields of work. As a culminating activity for the unit, students write their own biographical poems and autobiographies.

Developing Culturally Responsive Curriculum

What does culturally responsive curriculum look like? Where does a teacher start? How can teachers effectively design lessons and curriculum units that are culturally responsive? The answers to these questions are found in the sections that follow.

Culturally Responsive Lessons

AEL/Edvantia’s template for designing culturally responsive lessons is derived from the sociocultural theories of learning advanced by Vygotsky, Bruner, and Piaget—whose research concludes that learning is both social and cultural. According to this theory of learning, teachers utilize the cultural experiences of their students to build new learning experiences, and they create social contexts within the classroom that promote learning.

Classroom tasks or activities contain both culture and the individual; that is, the individual’s mental processes must grapple with learning concepts or skills the culture deems important. Because social interactions are culturally defined, sociocultural interactions can either facilitate or hinder learning. (The Education Alliance, 2002, p. 17)

Vygotsky (1978) describes this concept as the zone of proximal development, or “the distance between a child’s actual developmental as determined by independent problem solving and the potential level of development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). The challenge for a teacher is to find the developmental zone in which a student can approach a more difficult task with the appropriate amount and type of instructional support.

When a teacher and a student share the same culture, the teacher can more easily determine a student’s ability to work independently and provide guidance and support to help the student master a task. However, the rise in racially and ethnically diverse students in our nation’s schools has not been paralleled by a corresponding supply of diverse teachers. Therefore, there is often a state of cultural incongruence between students and teachers in which the language, expectations, and values of the home and school may differ vastly (Gay, 2000). In this case, student-teacher interactions may hinder, rather than assist, student learning. Cultural differences, then, must be bridged in order to assist student learning (The Education Alliance, 2002, p. 18).

The urgency for educators to expand their understanding of the role of culture in learning is increased by recent findings that “when students of color are taught with culturally responsive techniques . . . their academic performance improves significantly” (National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004). A culturally responsive teacher can become a valuable translator and guide for students by increasing her knowledge and understanding of the cultures represented in her classroom and by providing instructional scaffolding that helps students bridge the gap between prior knowledge and new learning.

Cohen and Ball (2001) echo the theory that learning occurs in the context of culture and communication:

Although many people think of instruction as what teachers do, it consists of interactions involving teachers, students, and content...In the ways in which they attend, listen, and respond, teachers in effect shape who their students are and what those students produce as they learn. Similarly, the individual students understand and make sense of their teachers in different ways. And teachers’ interpretations of the content have an impact on what is available to students to learn. (p. 75)

Figure 2 on the following page illustrates the sociocultural theory of learning from which AEL/Edvantia derived its template for culturally responsive instruction.

AEL/Edvantia’s culturally responsive lesson plan template tailors a generic lesson plan so that it bridges cultural differences and promotes dynamic interaction among students and between teachers and students. The template includes instructional strategies and resources that are culturally responsive and instructional scaffolding, structures, and supports for learning that help all students realize their full learning potential. For each element of a lesson, the template offers examples of how the element might be designed to be more culturally responsive. The examples are meant to be illustrative. They are not the only instructional strategies that might be used by a teacher.

The template also utilizes a “backward design” approach (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998; Drake & Burns, 2004). First, teachers communicate to students the purpose of the lesson and the content standards to be addressed. Then, before the lesson begins, teachers share with students what the assessment will be. Finally, teachers engage students in culturally appropriate learning activities and assessments that help them master the concepts and skills, while inviting students to think and talk about how and how well they are progressing.

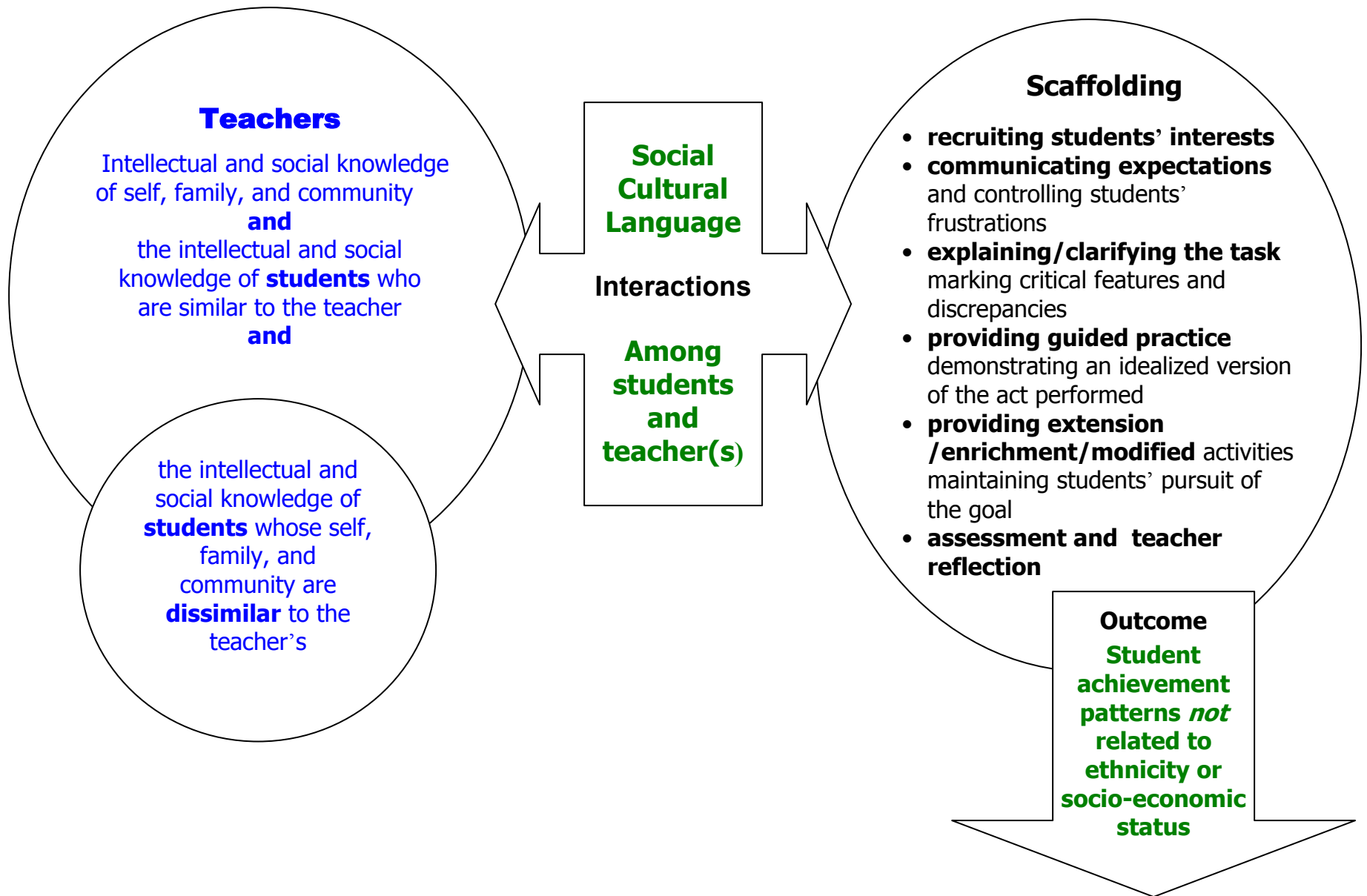


Figure 2. Culturally Responsive Instruction

AEL/Edvantia's Culturally Responsive Lesson Plan Template

Lesson:

Grade(s):

Content areas: List the content that may be integrated in the lesson (e.g., math, science, art, music, and literature).

Length of lesson: (number of days/hours/class periods). Some lessons may require more than one day.

Research supports the effectiveness of interdisciplinary approaches to instruction. (See, for example, Drake & Burns, 2004; Caine & Caine, 1991).

Lesson Objective/Purpose: What will students learn during this lesson? What will they understand more fully? What will they be able to do more successfully? How will they be different as a result of the lesson?

"Students should see the value of the work they will do and have a sense of curiosity, purpose, and anticipation about learning" (Irvine & Armento, 2001, p. 30).

Standards: (language arts, science, social studies, math, art, etc.). What specific state standards will be introduced, developed, mastered, reviewed, or extended through the lesson? Post these in the room so they are visible to students.

"Standard are the key to closing achievement gaps and maximizing learning for all students" (Haycock, 2001).

Resources/materials needed: What supplies or other resources will be needed?

Lesson Steps:

Recruit interest in the task (e.g., build on students' funds of knowledge).

Connect the lesson to students' lives by telling students to look for examples of the topic in their neighborhood. Have students tell stories about their experience with the topic or talk/write about what they know about the topic. Use a K-W-L chart to identify what students already know about the topic, what they want to learn, and what they have learned at the end of the lesson.

"In order to build on the knowledge and skills students bring to the classroom, teachers must explore the prior knowledge, ideas, misconceptions, and beliefs of the students" (Irvine & Armento, 2001, p. 30).

Communicate expectations—model/demonstrate/display/discuss what constitutes quality work on the task. What will the end result be and look like? Show/talk about what students will produce—a model, Web page, report, poster, poem, etc. Involve students in discussion of what excellent work looks like. Provide rubric or, when appropriate, involve students in the development of criteria.

“The effective schools research, as well as the literature on culturally responsive instruction, points to high expectations for student learning as essential for students’ intellectual development. To promote comprehension, deep understanding, and transferability of learning, instruction should involve some preparation in the form of modeling” (Bennett et. al., 2004, p. 14).

Explain/clarify the task (e.g., give step-by-step directions). Content may be modified to connect with or include students’ cultures through student investigation. Prompt students to pose questions about how the content connects to their life or culture. Offer directions in more than one way—orally, on overheads and handouts, with illustrations, etc.

“Cognitive research tells us that we process information in multiple ways. Students’ learning and recall can be improved by integrating information from both the verbal and visual-spatial forms of presentation” (Bennett, et. al., 2004, p. 16).

Provide guided practice and support for struggling students (teaching strategies that differentiate instruction, respond to cultural diversity, keep students on task, and limit frustration). Organize cooperative groups or pairs. Ask students to explain what they are doing/thinking as they work, using content vocabulary. Make specific, positive comments about student thinking. Set up study groups; provide student choice among tasks of varied complexity to achieve objectives. Ask students who have achieved mastery to lead reviews of material or assist other students.

The challenge for a teacher is to find the developmental zone in which a student can approach a more difficult task with the appropriate amount and type of support (See Vygotsky, 1978).

Provide extension/enrichment/modified activities for special student needs and interests. Provide modifications and choice for learning activities based on students’ learning needs and interests. Offer options for extending learning beyond the lesson. Provide more challenging activities that go beyond the mastery level of standards for students who have demonstrated mastery.

“Learning can be viewed as a result of opportunity to learn and perseverance. While the perseverance is up to the student, the teacher

controls the opportunity to learn. Ideally, a learning-centered environment would allow opportunities to be better matched to the student's, rather than the teacher's needs" (Bennett et. al., 2004, p. 16).

Assessment strategies: Students may assess their own work or work in groups to assess one another's work using a rubric, and explaining reasons for their assessments. Teachers may assess in more than one way (e.g., written, oral, product, performance) to get a true picture of student understanding. Other adult mentors (e.g., parents and community members or other teachers) may provide support for student learning and constructive feedback on student progress. Students may receive feedback on their first (draft) attempt, then revise work to a more advanced level. Students are not allowed to accept a failing grade and move on. "No-excuses" policy—students must keep at it (with help) until they achieve mastery.

"Assessments can be improved by moving from static, one-shot measures of test taking to environments that provide opportunities for new learning. These dynamic forms of assessment hold promise for promoting transfer and reducing achievement gaps" (Bransford & Schwartz, cited in Bennett et.al., 2004, p. 18).

Template in Action

The following lesson, designed in the template format, is taken from AEL/Edvantia's culturally responsive curriculum unit for Grade 4.

(Sample Lesson)

Organisms, Organisms Everywhere!**Lesson title:** Garbage In, Garbage Out!**Grade(s):** 4**Content area(s):** Science, language arts, social studies, math**Length of lesson:** One 45-minute class period**Lesson objective/purpose:** Students will receive a general overview of the world's environmental dilemmas. The overview should increase their understanding of the global implications of their actions.**Standards:** This lesson addresses multiple standards.

(WV): RLA: 4.3.1-2

(VA): RLA: 4.1 b-e

(WV): SS: 4.1.6

(VA): SS: VS 1 b, d, e

(WV): S: SC.4.2.2, SC.4.2.4-5, SC.4.2.8-10, SC.4.3.1-3, SC.4.4.6, SC.4.4.8,
SC.4.6.1, SC.4.6.4

(VA): S: 4.1 a, d, e, f, h, 4.5 f

(WV): M: 4.1.14-16, 4.4.5, 4.5.3

(VA): M: 4.7, 4.8, 4.10, 4.20

Resources/materials needed:

Poem by Shel Silverstein, *Sara Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out* from *Where the Sidewalk Ends*. This book is available at or in your school or community library.

Bags of garbage, collected over a period of three days. Ask parent volunteers or other teachers to collect their waste **paper** in a separate bag for a period of three days. Please be specific and inform them that no food is to be placed in this bag, only paper products such as construction paper, copy paper, or newsprint.

Disposable plastic gloves for each student

Chart paper

Spring scale or large balance calculators (optional)

Lesson Steps

Recruit interest in the task (e.g., build on students' funds of knowledge). The teacher will read poem by Shel Silverstein, *Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout Would Not Take the Garbage Out*. The class will discuss the implications of the poem (the mounting garbage) and move the discussion toward the concept of disposal of the garbage. The class will discuss the idea of the world's garbage and its size and volume. Communicate to the students that pollution of the air, water, and land can overwhelm the delicate balance of nature on the planet. Many species of plants and animals face extinction at an alarming rate. Until all of the people of the world are educated and informed, this destruction will continue. Because you, the student, are the leaders of tomorrow, it is your task to become responsible users and protectors of your environment.

Communicate expectations—model/demonstrate/display/discuss what constitutes quality work on the task (e.g., provide rubric and involve students in the development of criteria when appropriate). The teacher will demonstrate the process of categorization, using a small bag of waste paper and separate plastic bags. Observe safe practices by wearing plastic gloves and washing the hands after the process is complete. Weigh one of the categorized bags with a spring scale or large balance to demonstrate the use of the measuring instrument. Repeat the instruction for creating a bar graph if necessary (see *Scientist for a Day, Day Two*). Using the *Garbage In, Garbage Out!* Activity Sheet, the teacher will demonstrate how to calculate the weekly volume, the monthly volume, and the yearly volume of waste paper. Model the calculations by using fictitious data (such as 3 pounds per day, which in turn yields 21 pounds per month and 252 pounds per year). Metric measurements can be substituted for the English measurements. If the teacher utilizes a rubric for assessing the bar graph and/or the written summary, share the expectations with the students at this time.

Explain/clarify the task (e.g., give step-by-step directions). Designate separate plastic bags for various categories, such as newsprint, construction paper, and copier paper. Have students sort and categorize the waste paper collected over the three-day period. Make sure the students wear plastic gloves while they are involved in the sorting process. Caution them to wash their hands after the waste paper is categorized. The teacher may want to enlist the help of parent volunteers for the categorizing process. At the end of the third day, weigh the separate bags using a spring scale or large balance. Have each student record this data and create a bar graph to display the data. The *X*-axis should be labeled with the categories, and the *Y*-axis should be the volume. Working in pairs, have the students calculate the weekly, monthly, and yearly volume of each type of material. Each student will write a two-paragraph summary, based on the calculations, as to the possible effect on the environment of the amount of waste paper accumulated in a year. Students will share the summaries with their families. With their families, students will create a list of things they can do at home, in the community, and at school to preserve the environment. They will bring the lists to school to share with the class.

Provide guided practice and support for struggling students (teaching strategies that differentiate instruction, respond to cultural diversity, keep students on task, and limit frustration). Some students may have difficulty with manual data computations. Have them use a calculator and place them with a partner or in a small group to complete the task. Some students will need assistance in constructing a graph. The teacher may want to place them with a partner or in a small group to complete the task. Some students may need assistance with writing a summary. The teacher may want to place them with a partner or in a small group to complete the task. Alternately, students may create a problem-solution chart to identify the problem effects, causes, and solutions. An example may be found at <http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/readquest/strat/problem.html>

Provide extension/enrichment/modified activities for special student needs and interests. Students will collect relevant newspaper and magazine articles and share them with the class. The class will then create posters about different issues related to the environment, using the articles and making their own illustrations. The teacher may want to schedule a class trip to a recycling center. Students will make signs for each classroom in the building to remind them to turn off the lights and to turn off the water when not in use. Students will use recycled paper when appropriate.

The teacher may have students create graphs using Excel software. The Internet address listed below is for a rubric for assessing graphs created with Excel:
<http://www.dupree.k12.sd.us/ttl/excel.htm>

These sites contain an interactive bar graph.
<http://www.econedlink.org/lessons/em212/activity1.html>
<http://math.rice.edu/~lanius/Lessons/graph.html>

This is a good example of information used to complete a graph. It includes an example of a horizontal and vertical bar graph.

Assessment strategies. Student graphs may be assessed using a rubric. The Internet includes many examples of rubrics created for assessing graphs:
<http://www.cmsdnet.net/alliance/odellbo/Rubrics.htm>

Specifically for bar graphs:
<http://www.saskschools.ca/~stlsch/grassrootsmain/Class4/index.html>
<http://www.davis.k12.ut.us/etc/JIT/handouts.htm>

Student writing may be assessed using the West Virginia or Virginia writing rubric. Listed below are examples available on the Internet of rubrics created for assessing writing:
<http://www.k12.hi.us/~learning/1999/writingrubric1.htm>
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~aedoman/writingrubric.html>

Garbage In, Garbage Out! Activity Sheet



Calculating the volume of waste paper within each category:

1. Add the weight of the categorized bags together to determine the total weight of waste paper used over 3 days. Record the amount below.

Total of waste paper = _____ used over 3 days.

2. Divide the total by 3 to determine the amount used in 1 day.

Total of waste paper \div 3 = _____ used in 1 day.

3. Multiply the amount used in 1 day by 7 to determine the amount used in a week.

Total of waste paper used in 1 day \times 7 = _____ used in one week.

4. Multiply the amount used in one week by 4 to determine the amount used in one month.

Amount used in one week \times 4 = _____ used in one month.

5. Multiply the amount used in one month by 12 to determine the amount used in one year.

Amount used in one month \times 12 = _____ used in one year.

Culturally Responsive Curriculum Units

Effective teaching requires more than just individual lessons. Lessons should be organized in a logical and meaningful sequence within curriculum units. AEL/Edvantia staff, collaborating with a group of Kanawha County, West Virginia, teachers and AEL/Edvantia's minority research fellows, designed 11 culturally responsive curriculum units for elementary through high school grades. The curriculum units exemplify AEL/Edvantia's principles of culturally responsive instruction. All units are interdisciplinary. The elementary and high school units are designed for either an individual teacher or a teacher team. The middle school units are designed for interdisciplinary teamed instruction. Each lesson in the units follows the template described earlier in this section. The units are standards-based and aligned with the West Virginia and Virginia learning standards. However, they may easily be adapted to the standards for any state, although in some cases they may be more appropriate for a different grade level than is indicated due to differences in scope and sequence of curriculum in various states

The units were pilot tested in West Virginia and Virginia in two of AEL/Edvantia's Regional Educational Laboratory's intensive sites in 2003-2004 and 2004-2005. In four West Virginia schools, three of the units were taught as part of a larger technical assistance and research project to help these schools improve the achievement of their African American students. Some teachers who taught a unit had participated in professional development focused on the principles of culturally responsive instruction and their implementation in the classroom.

AEL/Edvantia's research supports the need for teachers to have good models of culturally responsive curriculum in order to enhance their skills in developing their own examples. Therefore, the units are included on a compact disc that accompanies this publication. Chapter 3, Guiding the Journey, provides instructions on how to use the curriculum units in teacher professional development. Following is a brief description of each curriculum unit.

Descriptions of Culturally Responsive Curriculum Units

Grade 1: We are Family!

This unit requires children to identify characteristics of their own families. They use these characteristics to compare their families to other families, one in the United States and one in another country. The children consider size, composition, roles and responsibilities, language spoken, religion, food, dwellings, traditions, and the type of government in place where the family lives. As the children identify these characteristics, they investigate which ones the natural environment influences. Emphasis is placed on recognizing and valuing diversity and on similarities among families. Knowledge of these

differences and similarities can help children to respect diversity and to resolve problems that may result from cultural differences.

Grade 2: Take a Closer Look at Your World: An Introduction to Maps, Globes, and Atlases

This unit of study provides instruction on map skills and geography concepts while integrating standards for other content areas. Students engage in hands-on investigations to learn about the theme. This unit of study helps students learn about people and places through observation and application of skills. Students learn how to create graphic representations to organize information about the world.

Grade 3: Facing Our Challenges

This unit of study provides instruction related to the overarching purpose or theme of facing personal, geographic, and physical challenges. Students engage actively in investigations connected to the theme. They learn about people and places through analysis and application of knowledge and skills, and they learn to create graphic representations to organize information.

Grade 4: Organisms, Organisms Everywhere!

This unit helps students understand how humanity is connected with all life forms on earth. The students recognize and identify ecosystems and environments, within their locale and beyond, in order to understand how every living organism is connected to all others. They also learn how organisms are dependent on each other for survival and quality of life. Students will be able to identify how waste, neglect, and development affect present and future cultures, environments, and organisms.

Grade 5: Hitch a Ride on the Underground Railroad

This unit helps students understand the history of slavery and the methods used by fugitive slaves and those who helped them to escape to Northern states and Canada. Students learn about historic places along the Underground Railroad that are a testament to African American history. Students also learn that the primary importance of the Underground Railroad was that it provided ample evidence of African American capabilities and gave expression to African American philosophy. Perhaps the most important factor they learn about the Underground Railroad is that its importance is not measured by the number of attempted or successful escapes from American slavery, but by the manner in which it consistently exposed the grim realities of slavery and refuted the claim that African Americans could not act or organize on their own. The secondary importance of the Underground Railroad is that it provided an opportunity for sympathetic White Americans to play a role in resisting slavery. Students learn that the Underground Railroad brought together, however uneasily at times, men and women of both races who set aside assumptions about each other and worked together to solve problems of mutual concern.

Grade 6: Identity: Celebrating Who We Are

The middle school unit for Grade six includes activities designed to build knowledge about students' personal and cultural heritage. For example, in language arts, students learn about Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and complete an inventory to identify the ways they "are smart." Then, in mathematics class, students graph the data from the inventory as well as from other data collection activities and learn to find the mean, mode, and median. Science activities include fingerprinting and determining dominant genetic traits of each student. Students in language arts and social studies classes read biographies or autobiographies about famous African Americans and others who are leaders in various fields of work. Later, students write their own biographical poems and autobiographies.

Grade 7: May the Force Be with You

This unit of study provides instruction in citizen participation in the democratic process. The unit integrates standards across content areas and helps students learn about history and citizenship through analysis and application of knowledge and skills. Students refine literacy skills through oral and written communication, learn to use reference sources to find information, and engage actively in investigations and activities connected to the theme.

Grade 8: Build Your Own Mousetrap Vehicle!

This unit, which incorporates standards from mathematics, science, and language arts, helps students to understand and apply components of design technology and methods for marketing. Students learn research and design strategies for constructing a toy race car and its container. Students also gain an understanding of the various techniques needed to develop and conduct a marketing plan and promotional sales presentation. Perhaps the most important aspect of the unit is that it helps students connect content knowledge and skills with a real-world application. Secondly, the unit provides an opportunity for students to immerse themselves in collaborative problem solving. The unit brings together students of all achievement levels to set aside assumptions about each other and to work together on an academic project.

High School Units

Unraveling the Details of the Past

In this unit, students learn that archaeology deepens our understanding of both past and present cultures. Through critically examining their own environment, students can deepen their understanding of their relationship to various cultures. Students use local data and examples, where practical, when participating in mock digs or creating dioramas. In addition, students compare their own life experiences with their heritage through real-life examples and stories shared by family members. As a result of this unit,

students gain a better sense of the interconnected nature of life and cultures. They also develop an appreciation of archaeology by discovering similarities and differences among cultures through active inquiry and excavation.

The Prayers and Protests of the Civil Rights Movement

This unit's purpose is to give students a greater understanding of the sacrifices made by American Civil Rights leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X. Students study literature and history from the American Civil Rights period and relate the experiences to current history and their own lives.

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Chapter 3: Guiding the Journey Toward a Culturally Responsive School

If students in the past were expected to change to fit the school, there is now an understanding that schools and teachers must change to meet the needs of students. (The Education Alliance at Brown University, 2001, p. 2)

Purpose

This chapter presents a journey and describes its direction, landmarks, means of travel, and obstacles. It is offered as a two-year school reform process designed to improve academic achievement for all students, but particularly for minority and low-income students. The distance of the journey and the time it will take to reach its destination depend on travelers' readiness for it, and their points of departure. A school faculty accustomed to planning and consulting together will travel more quickly than one that must first establish collaborative relationships. It will be easier for teachers and administrators who already have ties to all segments of the community to form relationships with community leaders than for those who do not. Schools with a diverse faculty are likely to learn more quickly from discussions about culture than an ethnically homogenous faculty. However, all who use this process will improve their level of collaboration, increase their community connections, deepen their understanding of their students' cultures, and improve their ability to use cultural strengths in instruction.

The targeted destination is a school that is able to help all of its students achieve their academic potential. The goal for this book is to help a school's faculty and administration reach the point along that path where they are able to recognize and build on the strengths of all students (instruction that is culturally responsive), and are able to identify and remove obstacles that may have been inadvertently placed in their paths (schooling that is culturally responsive). Schools that have far to travel may not reach that point by the end of the two-year process, but they will have reached a point where they recognize the value of the journey, can identify next steps, and have the skills and commitment to take them.

What Will Change as a Result of this Journey?

Schools undertaking this professional development process should expect to see significant improvements in instruction, as well as gains on an array of indicators of student academic success. Examples include higher attendance rates, higher test scores, better discipline, greater numbers of students enrolled in rigorous classes, and declining achievement gaps. Also, as a result of increased collaboration with peers and increased

instructional success, teachers and administrators should experience higher job satisfaction.

Origins of the Process

This book originated with work undertaken with four schools over a three-year period in Kanawha County, West Virginia. The work began with a series of dialogues between African American community leaders and district administrators and continued with the authors working with teams that included teachers and administrators in two elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school, which were part of the same feeder pattern. All except the high school had been identified as low-performing and had high percentages of low-income and African American students. In all four schools, state test scores for low-income and minority students were significantly lower than for other students.

Four facilitators worked with the schools, each facilitator dealing primarily with one school, using the processes recommended here and selecting activities and information to suit the context and needs of the particular school. In the third year of the project, selected teachers taught one of three units developed as exemplars of culturally responsive instruction. Some of those who taught the units were team members; some were teachers in participating schools, but not on the team; and still others were from nonparticipating schools. AEL/Edvantia conducted research on the project that included, in the third year, extensive classroom observations. Teachers who were most fully involved in the process showed the greatest improvements in instruction, with improvements declining with declining degrees of involvement. (See research findings on page x of the Preface.)

When this project was conducted, exemplar units of culturally responsive instruction had been developed only for Grades 1, 6, and 11. Therefore, not all teachers on the school teams were able to teach a unit. Research found that those who participated in team activities, but did not teach units, demonstrated more effective instruction than nonparticipants, but scored lower on class observations than those who also taught exemplar units. Consequently, the authors have expanded the number of units of instruction to include one for every grade, 1 through 11, in order for teachers to gain maximum benefit. Teachers explore the principles of culturally responsive instruction as they teach the units and observe one another. They then design and discuss their own culturally responsive lessons. The units are provided on the CD that accompanies this book.

School teams examined schooling practices throughout the project. As a result, the middle school changed scheduling practices to offer algebra to all middle school students and nominated qualified minority students for membership in a previously all-White honor society. All participating schools increased the number of books and materials that engage the interest of minority students in classrooms, libraries, and

summer reading programs; counseled students to choose more rigorous courses; worked with community leaders to inform parents about enrichment opportunities for their children; and brought community members into the school in greater numbers.

The fact that the team meetings, workshops, and experience of teaching an exemplar unit contributed to significant improvements in instruction and more equitable schooling practices is compelling evidence of effectiveness. Schools that use the process should expect to see similar improvements.

Research Base for This Professional Development Process

The processes used in this guide are based on bodies of school culture research and theory presented in *Creating a High-Performance Learning Culture* (Walsh, et al., 2005), and on organizational change as described by Peter Senge in *Schools that Learn* (2000). They are also consistent with the National Staff Development Council's standards for professional development (www.nsdc.org/standards/index.cfm). The lesson study process presented here is adapted from that described by the Lesson Study Research Group (Teachers College, Columbia University, www.tc.edu/lessonstudy/lessonstudy.html) and, in particular, as used by Roger A. Stewart and Jonathan L. Brendefur (2005).

The authors operate from the following premise: changes in schooling and instruction that have enduring effects on students' academic achievement must also have enduring effects on how teachers and administrators understand and carry out their professional responsibilities. The information and resources provided in this guide are intended to help educators learn what they need to know about educating minority and low-income students in order to challenge them to higher achievement and support their learning. The leadership team that is formed in this process will study together, conduct faculty workshops, and facilitate other teacher discussion groups, thus developing leadership and mentoring relationships within the school. The work begins with data analysis, continues with learning about culture, and culminates in designing, testing, and critiquing culturally responsive lessons. The lesson study experience holds promise of improving professional practice and student learning. The collaborative relationships and skills in analyzing instruction that develop should have enduring positive effects on instruction. They should also increase the effectiveness of subsequent professional development experiences.

Large-scale evaluations of two major district initiatives in Cincinnati and Philadelphia to develop communities of teachers found that while collaborative relationships among teachers generally improved, instruction changed only in those groups that were "focused on improving the instructional core of schooling and were provided with the necessary strategies, structures and supports" (Supovitz, Jonathan, Christman, & Jolley, 2003, p 1). The evaluators reported that while the teacher communities provided conditions for teachers to talk about instruction, those conversations did not occur naturally, but required a focus on the task of instructional

improvement (p. 6). The evaluators conclude that “communities of instructional practice are a powerful way for groups to . . . produce greater student learning” if they undertake “a structured investigation into teaching and its connection to the learning of students (p. 8).” The process proposed here begins with building collaborative relationships and developing the prerequisite knowledge base and concludes with structured investigation of culturally responsive curriculum and pedagogy.

How to Use This Book

It is expected that district and school leaders who choose to undertake this process will provide copies of this book for process facilitators, district coordinators and leadership team members. Chapter 1 of this book discusses schooling practices that should be examined for evidence that the school may be hindering rather than encouraging the academic success of its minority students. It also presents information about issues of culture as they affect schooling and describes the features of schools that have been effective with minority and low-income students. Chapter 2 discusses the principles of culturally responsive instruction and the lesson design template in detail. This Chapter describes the process by which the content of the first two chapters can be considered by school faculties. Chapter 4 provides the resources and tools that can be used in the process. Facilitators of the process and district coordinators may use the content from Chapters 1 and 2 to develop their own expertise. Facilitators may also use passages for team discussion. Facilitators and leadership team members will select from the resources, processes, and activities offered in Chapter 4 when planning for team meetings and facultywide workshops.

Prerequisite Beliefs

Those who lead and support this journey toward a culturally responsive school should be committed to the beliefs that

1. the journey is urgently needed
2. those embarking on it can and must reach their destination—a school in which students from all ethnicities and economic levels achieve academic success and leave with the intellectual skills and attitudes they need to continue their own journeys toward productive citizenship

If these are not intensely held beliefs, facilitators and school and district leaders may find it hard to persist through inevitable obstacles as they work to redefine attitudes and practices that are likely to be entrenched in school routines, curriculum, pedagogy, and, sometimes, even district policies and state legislation.

Not only will leaders encounter structural obstacles, they will need to persist through the initial doubts of some of their colleagues. Others who have worked with schools seeking to improve education for ethnic minorities and low-income students have found that teachers who held low expectations for those students, seeing them as “unmotivated, expecting failure, and having negative self-images and limited aspirations, also described themselves as pessimistic about change, and fearful of exposing their weaknesses” (Weinstein, Madison, Kuklinski, Spring, 1995). The authors found the same initial doubts and fears among some team members and people in the broader faculties of the schools with which they worked. Therefore, the process described here is designed to allow those involved not only to identify what changes are needed, but also to discover their own and their colleagues’ power to effect change.

This guide does not offer a program to be added to or superimposed on business as usual. Rather, it begins by examining the nature of that business as it affects not just students, but teachers, administrators, and community members. It concludes by redefining the business of school to produce greater satisfaction and success for everyone.

Preparing for the Journey through Dialogue

Preparing for the journey can include undertaking a task that may possibly be the most difficult and, at the same time, the most rewarding of any in the process: opening a conversation between school and community about race, ethnicity and culture. The Appendix describes the experience of the authors as they facilitated a dialogue between educators and African American community members that preceded their work with schools. It offers lessons learned and tools for use by others. Several years after the dialogue’s conclusion, participants—both community members and educators—continue to refer to it as valuable in forming relationships and improving understanding. An added benefit was that the dialogues succeeded in revising educators’ belief that color-blindness is a virtue.

The authors found that educators who did not consider themselves racist often claimed to be color-blind. Those who held this position insisted that they made no distinction among children by virtue of their skin color, treating all children equally. As an extension of this position, neither did they feel they distinguished among students based on social status or wealth. The subtext of this position implies that if one were to notice such distinctions, it would be to the detriment of children of color or of poverty, because being other than White or middle class is to be less than White or middle class. Therefore, talking about differences is, at best, impolite. It is, after all, rude to point out the deficiencies of others. While the professional development process led people to realize that differences are not necessarily deficiencies, the dialogues allowed them to come to that realization in personal and powerful ways.

The dialogue process changed the dynamics of the more common school-community relationship as we know it; that is, educators informing parents and others about, and soliciting support for, actions previously planned and decisions previously made, or instructing the community about how to support school efforts. In these dialogues, school personnel shared disaggregated data about school performance with community members. They exchanged views concerning the school experience of minority students, and then school and community people learned together what research has to say about educating minority and low-income students. Resulting actions, whether based in the school or the community, were jointly planned.

Such a dialogue not only builds support and good will in the community for schools, it introduces educators to different perspectives and accustoms them to talking about race and culture, thus increasing their readiness to continue exploring these issues in their team meetings.

However, if district or school leaders feel that local conditions or district resources mitigate against beginning the process with community dialogues, the Appendix also offers a description of less formal and complex methods for becoming better acquainted with community leaders.

Overview of the School Improvement Process

This description of the two-year school improvement process presumes that it will be undertaken by a school, rather than a district or multiple schools. However, it can be expanded to involve larger units. If several schools undertake this process together, the elements described below will apply to each school, with school facilitators and school teams gathering periodically to share experiences. When multiple schools are involved, it is particularly valuable if they are part of a feeder pattern from elementary to middle school to high school, so that the progress made by students attending a culturally responsive elementary school continues as they move to culturally responsive middle and high schools.

Facilitators

The process may be guided by trained facilitators who, with the support of assigned district contacts, work with school-based leadership teams. (See p. 89 for information on a training source.) Facilitators prepare team members for the process during a summer institute. The facilitators then meet with school leadership teams twice each month throughout the first year of the process and assist teams in planning faculty workshops. In the second year they meet with the leadership teams on an as needed basis. Throughout the process they are available for telephone and electronic consultation.

Summer Institute

During the summer institute participants receive an overview of the process components. Using one of the two data-analysis methods suggested in Chapter 4, teams plan a school workshop in which their faculties will organize to collect and analyze data. They are introduced to issues of culture as they affect themselves and their students. Finally, they review culturally responsive units. They plan when, during the Fall semester, they will teach the units and arrange for class observations during unit instruction.

Leadership Teams

At the beginning of the school year leadership teams, with facilitators' assistance, lead the data analysis workshops for faculties that they planned during the institute. While a faculty gathers and analyzes data to assess how minority and low-income students are faring in the school, leadership team members meet twice each month as they explore the principles of culturally responsive instruction, teach exemplar units, and observe one another's instruction.

Team members conduct a second faculty workshop in the Fall semester to hear reports of the data analysis findings and to introduce issues of culture to the faculty. Early in the second semester each school leadership teams presents a workshop to introduce the faculty to the principles of culturally responsive instruction. Team members then begin to facilitate other teacher teams, using the content and methods they have experienced in their own team meetings. Those team members also teach culturally responsive units and observe one another's teaching. While team leaders facilitate other groups, they begin a lesson study process in their own team meetings.

At this point, if they have not already done so, leadership teams may wish to form an e-mail reflector group or other electronic method of sharing ideas and consulting with one another about their experiences as group facilitators.

At the end of the first year, the leadership team will have completed the lesson study process, and other faculty teams will have completed teaching, observing, and discussing the exemplar units. During the second year, leadership team members continue facilitating other teacher groups who now begin the lesson study process. During this phase of the process, leadership team members decide how often they will meet together to discuss the challenges and successes of the groups they facilitate and assess the school's progress toward its destination.

In planning and leading the four faculty workshops, leadership team members use resources and activities from Chapter 4 as they have experienced them in the summer institute and in team meetings.

District and School Support

As with any sustained school reform experience, it is critical that district and school resources are dedicated to its support over time. Teacher leaders should be compensated for additional responsibilities, such as planning and leading workshops. If teachers are to meet before or after school, they will also need compensation for this added obligation. If they meet during school hours, scheduling arrangements must be made so that their students do not lose instructional time. The authors suggest that, where more than one school is undertaking this process, teams meet during the school year for two workshops that may be planned and led by the facilitators. Substitute teachers will need to be scheduled and paid during these workshops.

Schools should be prepared to provide materials needed by facilitators for team meetings. While most of the materials suggested are available on Web sites or provided here, Chapter 4 recommends videotapes and CDs that demonstrate culturally responsive teaching. The authors found that reading and discussing chapters of *The Dreamkeepers* (Ladson-Billings, 1994) an effective way to introduce issues of culture as they affect students. Districts or schools may wish to purchase this book for team members. Districts or schools will also need to supply materials such as copy paper and transparencies, as well as access to copiers.

If, in the course of their work, teams discover district policies or practices that they believe hinder the academic progress of minority students, school and district leaders should be prepared to consider seriously the recommended changes and, when appropriate, to present recommendations to the school board.

Districts will need to consider budget implications when deciding whether to hold the community dialogues described in the Appendix, and whether to include all faculty or only the leadership team and key district leaders.

If the school or district chooses to conduct dialogue sessions with the community, participation by district and/or school personnel should be mandatory. Otherwise, it is likely that those whose interest in motivating minority students to greater achievement is already high will participate and those who doubt that improvement is possible will not.

Who Will Be Involved in Leadership Teams

Trained facilitators may lead the process, working with district and school contacts. Principals select leadership team members, in consultation with facilitators. Because teachers on the team, at some point in the process, will be expected to use one of the exemplar instructional units provided with this book, teacher members should be chosen, to assure that they are qualified to teach the units provided. While all units are standards-based and interdisciplinary, they do not necessarily include content and skills

Table 1
Process Timeline

When	What	Who
Winter or spring prior to beginning the process	Meeting to review the process, role group responsibilities, support needed, and to schedule events	Superintendents, district representatives, principals, and facilitators
Before the end of school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form school leadership teams. 2. Plan methods for forming and scheduling faculty groups who begin to meet in the second semester. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Principals, in consultation with facilitators 2. Administrative staff in consultation with facilitators
Spring or summer prior to beginning the process (optional)	Community dialogues	District and school administrators, volunteer teachers, and community representatives
Summer prior to beginning the process	Orientation institute for leadership teams, led by facilitator	Principals, leadership teams, and district representatives
First semester of the first year	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership teams begin teaching and observing the instruction of culturally responsive units. They meet twice monthly to discuss their experiences. 2. Leadership conducts two workshops, one for school faculty to plan for conducting data analysis, the other for faculty to report results and to be introduced to issues of race, ethnicity, and culture. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership teams, facilitator(s) 2. Leadership teams (with assistance from facilitator) and school faculty

Table 1 (cont'd.)

When	What	Who
Second semester of the first year	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership teams, with help from facilitators, plan and conduct faculty workshops to introduce principles of culturally responsive instruction and plan for other groups of faculty members to teach and observe the exemplar units. 2. Team members begin facilitating other teacher groups as they discuss their experiences teaching and observing the units. 3. Leadership teams continue to meet twice monthly as they begin the lesson study process. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership teams and facilitators 2. Leadership team members and faculty groups 3. Leadership teams and facilitators
Second year	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership team, with help from facilitators, plan and conduct a workshop in which they introduce the lesson study process to their faculties. 2. Leadership team members facilitate teacher groups as they undertake the lesson study process. 3. Leadership teams meet periodically to discuss their experiences as facilitators and assess the school's progress toward cultural responsiveness. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership teams and faculties 2. Leadership team members and faculty groups 3. Leadership teams (Facilitators may also participate at the invitation of the team.)
End of second year	Year-end assessment of progress and celebration	Everyone who participated

from all core content areas. For example, if the principal is considering an 11th-grade teacher for the team, that teacher should be one who teaches either English or social studies, since the unit deals with content in those subjects. (It is also possible to include both 11th-grade English and social studies teachers, so that they can collaborate while teaching the unit.). A second consideration when selecting team members is the fact that they will facilitate teams of other faculty members. While leadership team members will grow in skill and confidence, it may be unwise to select members who have in the past avoided or refused leadership opportunities.

The focus of this effort includes the classroom, but it also extends beyond the classroom to schooling practices and policies, which are administrative responsibilities. It is essential that the principal participate in team meetings, both in the role of instructional leader and administrative manager. The curriculum coordinator, if there is one, should also be included. Other roles to be considered for inclusion on the team include counselor, parent coordinator, and assistant principal. The principal might want to add parents or community leaders to the team, particularly if no one on the faculty or administrative staff can speak from the perspectives of the cultures of the school's minority students. If this option is chosen, it is best to add two people, since a single person might find the experience intimidating. Non-teaching members may be included in those meetings that are dedicated to developing an understanding of students' cultures. Once the meetings begin to address instruction, facilitators will need to consider whether non-teaching members should continue to participate. At this point, community participants may feel they have little to offer. Also, in the early stages of teacher discussions about their own teaching, the presence of district personnel or community members could make teachers more hesitant to raise questions or problems.

In forming the team, the principal should take into consideration two factors.

1. *Size.* A team that is too large will limit members' opportunity to participate; one too small will limit the number of subsequent teacher teams that can be formed. One or two teachers from each grade level are probably the maximum number who can be productively involved. Small schools may not be able to include teachers from all grades.
2. *Diversity.* Teachers who are members of the minority cultures present in the school should be included when possible. However, including teachers who are knowledgeable about and comfortable with the school's low-income or minority neighborhoods may be better than choosing teachers who, while they may share skin color with minority students, appear to share little else. In either case, the aim in forming the team is to include members who are effective teachers and who are not resistant to looking at the status quo with fresh eyes.

Caution: Beware of expecting minority team members to speak for the whole minority group, or even to speak at all in early meetings. Certainly not all educators from the same minority group will hold the same views. In fact, some

may have views more in common with their White colleagues than with their students' communities. Often, minority educators have adapted to school cultures where race/ethnicity is not discussed (Delpit, 1988; Howley & Kusimo, 2004). Minority teachers may at first be cautious about expressing views that differ from their peers and will certainly resent being viewed as spokespersons for "their people."

Team members will meet together regularly, following the steps in the process. They will, in turn, lead other teams through the process. Team members will not complete the entire process before beginning to lead other teams. However, they should have proceeded far enough to feel reasonably confident in their ability to lead others in the steps they have already taken.

District Involvement

If this effort is to have lasting effects or influence other schools in the district, it must have district support that goes beyond funding to involvement. We strongly recommend that key district personnel join any school-community dialogue sessions that may precede team meetings. If a district staff member is designated to work with a particular school, that person should, if possible, participate in team meetings in which issues of schooling and cultural proficiency are discussed. When teachers begin using the culturally responsive units, the representative should observe classrooms to learn what culturally responsive instruction looks like, and join those meetings in which teachers discuss their experiences with the units.

Facilitation

Facilitators must be prepared to help participants learn to understand differing communication styles of the cultures represented on the team and in the school. For example, typically European Americans speak dispassionately in professional settings and can misinterpret passion as anger. African Americans are more likely to speak with intensity and directness. We found that on more than one occasion, White participants experienced the intensity with which African American participants spoke as an attack, even though the words spoken were not hostile, nor were they directed at White people. In "Teaching through Traditions: Incorporating Languages and Culture into Curricula" (1999), Linda Skinner points out that some Native American speakers may be indirect in speech and judicious in choosing when to speak. In group discussions, what they say can be overridden or discounted by more insistent talkers.

Although not required, it is helpful to have two facilitators from different cultures. Cross-culture facilitators can model speaking and listening to each other and questioning one another's views when topics are sensitive. Facilitators must be able to lead team members beyond surface politeness to the point where they can speak honestly. At the

same time, they must be able to create safe conditions where honest expressions can be heard and honest responses respectfully given.

No matter how carefully planned and skillfully facilitated, discussions about race, ethnicity, and culture will initially be uncomfortable for some participants. If team members resist talking about sensitive topics, facilitators must be ready to persist, willing to insist, and able to reassure people that discomfort is a normal part of the process and will pass.

Time Commitment for Leadership Team Teachers

During the first year of the two-year process, leadership teams will meet twice monthly. Meetings should be at least one hour. Longer is preferable for teams of eight or more. Promptness should be stressed, since late arrivers can sidetrack team discussions and even render the discussions ineffective. If several schools in a feeder pattern are working together, leadership teams should meet together for one-half to a full day, at least twice during the year. Outside of team meetings, members will be expected to complete brief reading assignments. Some team members will teach units and all team members will observe at least one unit lesson. Each teacher member will teach lessons designed by the team, using a lesson design template provided in Chapter 4. As many team members as possible will observe the lesson, and the team will discuss its effect, using a lesson study format also provided in Chapter 4.

In the second semester of the first year, team members begin facilitating other teacher groups in bimonthly meetings, so that they meet every week, twice as members of leadership teams that are facilitated by others and twice as facilitators of other teacher groups. In the second year, leadership team members facilitate teacher groups twice each month. Team members determine how often during the second year they meet together.

Establishing Productive Leadership Teams

In schools where teachers are accustomed to planning together and consulting one another about teaching strategies, working relationships will develop quickly. However, such schools are relatively rare. Even when collaboration is the norm, it will take time for teachers to feel comfortable talking honestly together about race and culture. Developing easy and open discussion can be particularly difficult in a group that includes supervisors and other administrators. Discussion norms should be established in the first meeting and reviewed in each meeting until they are no longer necessary. The discussion processes in Chapter 4 will also encourage and support open discussion.

Principal's Role

Principals have a critical role in establishing the tone of team meetings. Facilitators should talk with principals before the first meeting about ways to convey the message that team meetings will be safe places for open discussions. Principals should be willing to take the lead in asking questions, expressing doubts or uncertainties, seeking the opinions of others, and honoring views that differ from their own. They should also make a point of affirming teachers' observations and praising their instruction, as long as such affirmations and praise are genuine and sincerely felt. Principals should also convey the message to team members that full participation is expected, and must demonstrate that they hold the same expectation for themselves. For example, they should also complete outside reading assignments given to team members.

Team Dynamics

A mature team is one in which participants

- complete outside assignments prior to meetings
- are prompt and regular in attendance
- listen respectfully to one another and respond thoughtfully to what is said
- express themselves honestly and respectfully
- acknowledge doubt and seek more information
- apply what they learn to specific circumstances in the school and classroom

It will take time for teams to develop maturity, particularly when issues are sensitive. The time team members spend discussing schooling practices and exploring cultural issues allows the team to mature before beginning to confront issues that have personal implications, such as what one does or does not do in the classroom. In fact, the topics as presented move from a broad and somewhat impersonal view of the issues involved in educating minority and low-income youth, gradually narrowing the focus until the last topic requires teachers to practice, through lesson design and instruction, the use of culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum.

Team Meetings

Team meetings address four areas:

1. developing cultural proficiency through reading, considering together and applying research and theory that address culture-based factors related to achievement gaps, and considering school and classroom actions to improve outcomes in educating minority and low-income students
2. considering changes in schooling practices that the faculty-conducted data analysis identified as needed

3. teaching the units and discussing the principles of culturally responsive instruction exemplified in the units
4. designing, teaching, and discussing culturally responsive lessons

Developing cultural proficiency. In the summer institute, leadership teams are introduced to the distinctions among race, ethnicity, cultural heritage, and cultural inheritance, and to what research and theory has to say concerning school-related causes of and remedies for achievement gaps. In their team meetings, they will broaden and deepen their understanding of these concepts. Some of the resources for this purpose that are offered in Chapter 4 address issues specifically concerning African American students, since the minority student populations of the schools with which we worked were primarily African American. However, most resources will also apply to other cultural groups. Facilitators following this process may wish to supplement or replace suggested resources with ones tailored to their school's student population, or substitute some resources that became available after this book was written.

These resources are suggestions rather than a curriculum facilitators are obligated to cover in their entirety. Some selections address issues related to high schools only, for example. However, unless facilitators find that team members already understand some concepts raised by the articles, they should make an effort to assure that key concepts are addressed.

Occasionally, team members may propose for the team's discussion articles they have found helpful or of particular interest. In such cases, if the content of the proposed articles appears to enhance rather than distract from the meeting's purpose, facilitators can read the article in advance and lead the discussion or, depending on the team's maturity, become a team member and invite the person proposing the article to lead the discussion.

Considering changes in schooling practices. Team members' own cultures and values will influence how quickly and with what complexity they come to understand the concepts and how proactive they are willing to be in taking action. Although the report of the faculty's data analysis may indicate that some schooling practices need to change, facilitators should not be unduly concerned if team members do not initially choose to recommend changes. As team members deepen their understanding of the needs of students from different ethnic and cultural groups, they are likely to revisit schooling issues and propose actions that were not obvious to them earlier or whose necessity they did not previously accept.

Each team member should bring to the session a notebook that will serve as a journal. At the end of each session, 5 to 10 minutes should be allotted to recording in journals the resources discussed, their own reactions to them and/or to the discussion, and the implications they feel the discussions have for the school or for instruction. The journals can be a resource for team members as they begin to facilitate other teacher groups. In the last, celebratory session of the process, facilitators can ask team members to review what they have written and then to write a paragraph or two about what insights

they have gained or changes they see in their thinking over the course of the experience. If the process has been effective, participants will have internalized new views to the extent that, without written evidence, they may no longer remember earlier views. When Weinstein, Madison, and Kuklinski concluded their work with an urban 9th-grade faculty to raise expectations for at-risk youth, they found that at the end of the effort, teachers had so changed their perspectives that they disbelieved researchers' notes from early meetings that documented negative views (p. 130).

Teaching the units and discussing the principles. All units are interdisciplinary, although at the high school level, they do not include all four disciplines in the same unit. If teachers on the team will be working together on a unit, it would be advantageous to plan teachers' class schedules so that they share students and, if possible, have common planning time. However, particularly at the high school level, that may not be feasible. If necessary, units can be taught in one content area. However, teachers can work together, even if they do not share all their students. For example, if a unit is taught by an English and a social studies teacher who share some but not all of their students, students in the English class but not in the social studies class can complete the English assignments and be grouped for team work with classmates who have benefited from the social studies unit, and so share their knowledge.

When teachers review the units, some may express concern that some unit activities will be beyond the skills of their students. These concerns are based in what teachers know of student performance in their classes to date, but may also be influenced by their views of students' potential. Facilitators will need to reinforce that the units have been successfully field-tested in classes with low-income and minority students. Graham Nuthall, after decades of experimental study and detailed analysis of student learning in classroom settings, reports the following:

Our data . . . show that differences in what students learn, and differences in what they do on tests, are both created by differences in how they engage with classroom learning and testing activities. In both cases, their performance is a function of their interests, motivation, and understanding of the purposes and beliefs of the teacher and/or tester. *The result is that ability tests are highly correlated with school achievement tests (and with the kinds of work that students produce in class) not because of the role that ability is supposed to play in the learning process, but because scores on both ability and achievement tests are determined by interests and motivational and cultural factors [italics added].* (Nuthall, 2005, p. 921)

The units are designed to address the motivational and cultural factors that affect students' level of engagement with learning. They call on students to interact with challenging, but grade-appropriate content and activities that address content standards. Where students lack prerequisite skills, lesson plans offer ways to provide guided practice and support. The units have successfully engaged students of all so-called ability levels and motivated them to achieve at levels beyond what has been their typical

classroom performance. As Nuthall points out, higher achievement equates with higher motivation to achieve, rather than higher native ability.

As teachers discuss their experiences teaching the units and observing one another's instruction, facilitators will help them identify the five principles of culturally responsive instruction—high expectations, cultural competence, active teaching, student-controlled discourse, and relevant curriculum and instruction—as they are evidenced in unit objectives and activities.

During unit instruction, team members will observe one another's instruction at least once. Those teaching units will select and discuss specific lessons, using the debriefing protocol provided for the lesson study process. They will also assess students' success in achieving the unit's objectives. Those observing unit lessons will also use the observation protocol provided for lesson study.

Lesson Study

Lesson study as a professional development process originated in Japan and has been used increasingly in this country over the past 10 years. It is a process that allows teachers to systematically examine their practice through planning, teaching, observing, and critiquing lessons. In its traditional form, teachers from the same content area work together to explore content instruction. It is used here to explore culturally responsive instruction across content areas.

If the leadership team has progressed as anticipated, teacher leaders will begin lesson study at the beginning of the second semester. In lesson study, “a collaborative group of teachers follows a recursive cycle of articulating a clear lesson plan, observing the teaching of this lesson, and revising the plan and instruction” (Stewart and Brendefur, 2005, p. 682). The process described by Stewart and Brendefur includes videotaping the lesson so that it can be viewed during team meetings. If a team chooses to videotape lessons, it would undoubtedly enrich the discussion, provided that team meetings are long enough to include both viewing and discussion. Teachers will have become familiar with the observation and discussion components of lesson study when they taught and observed the teaching of the units. Of course, while teachers are using the exemplar units, the process does not include lesson design, because the lessons are already designed. But using the observation and discussion protocols will allow teachers to become reasonably familiar with the process of discussing lessons and student learning before they are required to teach and discuss lessons designed by the group.

Lesson Design and Analysis

During the first meeting of each month, team members will together craft a lesson that one of them will use with students. Up to, but no more than, four of the other team members will observe the lesson. In the second meeting, team members will debrief the

experience. The lesson design process should continue until every teacher has had the experience of teaching a lesson designed by the team, then presenting the experience for team members' feedback. This allows every teacher member of the team to experience teaching at least one team-crafted lesson, and to participate in the creation, observation, and discussion of numerous lessons. During this portion of the process, teachers try out what they have learned from their discussion and from teaching the exemplar unit.

By the time lesson study begins, it should be evident from team discussions that teachers have a greater appreciation for their students' potential, as well as more confidence in their own ability to challenge their students to higher achievement. They should also have developed open and trusting relationships with their team members. Even so, teachers who have never before done so will not be likely to welcome the prospect of exposing their instruction to the view of their peers and receiving feedback. They may also resist developing written lesson plans in the format required for this process. Stewart and Brendefur found that teachers who participated in their lesson study process were initially unaccustomed to developing plans in the detail required for others to understand the lesson. We also found this to be the case. There is a substantial difference between plans developed for one's own use and plans developed for others to understand. Not only is the latter much more work, it is work that is not necessarily required to teach the lesson. Once lesson study begins—in order to reduce work required outside of team meetings, increase the collaborative experience, and, most importantly, get maximum benefit from the experience of lesson design—lessons will be designed collaboratively in team meetings.

Each month, one teacher member of a team will be assigned to teach a lesson. That teacher will come to the planning meeting with a topic, the standards he or she intends to address and, if desired, a draft lesson for the group's consideration, or at least some ideas about how to proceed. The teacher should be prepared to explain to the group how this lesson should build on previous work and lead to work that will follow. The group will brainstorm ideas for the lesson, with the teacher as the arbiter of which ideas to accept. Once the basic activities have been selected, the group will complete the lesson plan template, modifying or enhancing the activities to assure that all elements of the template are present in the lesson. Finally, the group will review the lesson in light of the principles of culturally responsive instruction, further modifying activities, if necessary, to strengthen its cultural responsiveness. Once lesson study begins, discomfort should fade as team members experience the benefit gained from the discussions.

Ideally, these lessons will be parts of instructional units, so that setting the context for the lesson will include identifying the unit's objectives and its theme or overall purpose. However, those teachers whose normal instruction follows a textbook may not be accustomed to planning units. In some cases, they may understand what they are being asked to do—teaching exemplar units and designing lessons—as additions to, or even

distractions from, their normal curriculum and instruction. The facilitator will need to iterate over time that

- the lessons should develop in students the skills and knowledge that teachers are accountable for imparting
- this professional development experience, if successful, will result in their adapting their normal instruction to incorporate new learnings, not inserting isolated culturally responsive lessons or units into their normal instruction from time to time
- challenging, culturally responsive lessons will likely produce a more enjoyable teaching experience, as students respond to them with higher interest and achievement

Not only does this process allow teachers to apply what they learn from teaching and discussing the units, it provides them with the experience of learning from one another. We found that, without a structure and guidance, teachers were happy to trade tips about resources or activities that “worked” (i.e., students appeared interested and engaged), but they were less likely to talk about lessons they regarded as problematic, to consider why and with whom activities were successful, or to define success in terms of evidence that students learned important concepts and skills. These reflective discussions provide teachers with the experience of a learning community where questions and problems are viewed as opportunities to learn together. Their most mature, group discussions will shift focus from teaching to learning (i.e., from themselves and their teaching strategies to their students)—what they learned and how they learned it.

As a teacher who participated in the lesson study process led by Stewart and Brendefur reported,

There is power in collaborative planning. There is value in observing colleagues teach. . . . This process is less teacher directed and more student centered in lesson planning. There is more focus on your desired result. (Stewart & Brendefur, 2005, p. 686)

Catherine Lewis studied the process used by Japanese teachers. She reports that one Japanese teacher said,

Why do we do [lesson study]? I don’t think there are any laws [requiring it]. But if we didn’t, we wouldn’t be teachers. (Lewis, 2002, p. 20)

Another Japanese teacher reflected,

Unless you improve your own skills, you can’t do a good lesson even with a good lesson plan or good textbooks. Precisely because of this belief, we all do [lesson study] and try to improve our teaching skills. If you isolate yourself and do whatever you wish to do, I don’t think you can ever conduct good lessons. (Lewis, 2002, p. 21)

Those who have used lesson study caution that it is easy to use and hard to master. Most teachers are unaccustomed to opening their practice to the observation and feedback of their colleagues. Some of their initial concern will be alleviated by the fact that the team will have developed collegial relationships in their previous work and will have experienced lesson study with the predesigned lessons in the units. However, the facilitator should not be surprised if initial discussions are superficial. The facilitator's role is to be kind and supportive, but also to encourage people to move past their reluctance to question their colleagues by asking probing questions and offering suggestions for the group's consideration. Early discussions may center on teaching strategies rather than on student thinking. The facilitator will need to redirect attention, at times, by asking questions about what students are doing and learning. Facilitators who have never before used this process may find that they, too, gain skill over time.

Although teachers will likely have the experience of teaching a collaboratively designed lesson once, the benefit from that experience can be amplified by the experience of collaboratively developing, observing, and reviewing taught lessons. The ultimate goal of the lesson study process is not to accumulate a library of demonstration lessons. Rather, it is to deepen thinking about instruction and focus teachers' attention on student learning. Thus, the benefit will come not from accumulating a collection of lessons, but from what teachers learn from creating, observing, and discussing lessons that can inform their daily instruction.

Leadership Team Members as Group Facilitators

Once team members have gained sufficient comfort with the process and materials, they will begin facilitating their own teacher teams. They will not necessarily repeat every element of the original meetings. If other teams are content-specific, the facilitator may prefer to make substitutions for some of the readings used in the original team meetings. For example, the facilitator may wish to include information about Robert Moses' Algebra Project or the SEED Project for a math team, while a facilitator of an English team may wish to add articles on literacy, ESL students, or Ebonics. Leadership team facilitators can assist teacher facilitators with identifying additional resources for team discussions.

When leadership teams meet, facilitators need to be deliberate in preparing team members to facilitate their own groups. After a couple of months of team meetings, facilitators may wish to ask team members to lead discussions rather than keeping that responsibility for themselves. They may also wish from time to time to share with team members how they prepare for team meetings.

Principals and facilitators should also consider in advance how to handle situations where members of teacher-facilitated groups resist group participation or even actively sabotage group discussions. While most teachers are likely to welcome the opportunity to talk together, and even to design and analyze lessons together, a few may react negatively to the experience. While resistant teachers may in time become believers

in the process, until that time, they can destroy a group's productiveness. In such cases, the authors recommend that teachers who continue to resist be excused from participation and instead be assigned additional duties that otherwise would be the responsibility of participating teachers. Principals may find that once resistant teachers hear others talk about the value of the process, they may ask to rejoin a group.

Process Assessment

When the authors began working with teacher teams, the first meeting consisted of facilitating team discussions using questions designed to elicit members' views about race, ethnicity and culture. The purpose of the discussions was to assess their prior knowledge and attitudes before beginning the work. The discussions were taped and later transcribed by researchers. At the last workshop, during which the teams from the four schools gathered to consider what they had learned and how their schools had changed, facilitators used the initial group discussion questions in interviews. The results provided evidence of the shifts in teachers' self reports about their views and attitudes. Those who wish to assess attitude changes reported by teachers may wish to replicate this assessment process. They will, however, need to have access to transcribers and to researchers who can systematically analyze and compare the results.

Leaders may also wish to assess attitude shifts among faculty and staff over time, as more and more teachers participate in the process. There are a number of instruments for gauging changes in teacher attitudes. The Edvantia Measure of School Capacity for Improvement, for example, includes questions concerning attitudes about antidiscriminatory teaching. If this assessment is used, AEL/Edvantia researchers will analyze and report the results. (See Chapter 4, Section I, for ordering information.)

Disaggregated state achievement test scores are the most obvious indicators of success. However, it would be unrealistic to expect to see dramatic schoolwide gains on state test results before a majority of teachers have had the opportunity to complete the process. Schools should begin to see some improvements in the first year, with gains continuing and accelerating in subsequent years. If it is possible to access class- and student-level data, pre- and posttest scores could be compared for targeted students of teachers who have participated in team meetings, taught the exemplar unit, and/or designed, taught, and discussed lessons.

One way to gauge progress is for leaders to identify and monitor, over time, a set of indicators that can be reliably measured and on which they expect to see progress as a result of their work. These may include—in addition to scores on statewide tests—improved attendance rates, increased enrollments of minority and low-income students in advanced classes, increased numbers of minority parents and community members involved with the school, lower failure rates, and decreased discipline referrals.

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Chapter 4: Resources, Activities, and Processes

Chapter 4 is divided into five sections.

- Section I—General Resources and Discussion Processes
- Section II—Data Analysis and Schooling Practices
- Section III—Cultural Proficiency
- Section IV—Principles of Culturally Responsive Instruction
- Section V—Lesson Study

Resources in Section I might be helpful background reading for facilitators. This section also includes discussion norms and directions for discussion processes that ensure that every person's views are heard. The remaining four sections parallel the topics delineated in the facilitator's guide. Each section begins with an annotated list of easily accessible resources (articles, books, videos, and CD-ROMs). Articles selected for inclusion are relatively short—most are fewer than 10 pages—and are written with practitioners in mind. Most of these articles can be accessed from the Web or found in widely available educational journals such as *Educational Leadership* and *Phi Delta Kappan*. Most of the recommended books, videos, and CDs are relatively inexpensive. Price and source information are provided.

The list of resources is followed by directions for activities and processes that facilitators may use either in team discussions or during faculty workshops.

Facilitators may wish to assign outside readings sparingly, keeping in mind the numerous demands already placed on educators' time. Often a more effective way to cover content is to assign one team member to read and report on a single article, with the facilitator providing copies to other team members at the time the article is discussed. This method works well when a facilitator wants team members to become familiar with several articles on the same topic.

If an article longer than three or four pages is to be read during a team meeting, the facilitator can use a jigsaw process, dividing the article into sections and assigning one or more persons to read each section and report its content to the group. Of course, the facilitator should be thoroughly familiar with any material to be discussed and should prepare discussion questions in advance. These questions can be used to provide focus during the reading period and to guide the discussion.

Section I: General Resources and Discussion Processes

Resources and information on discussion processes are contained in this section and will be helpful to practitioners.

Resources

Assessment Laboratory Network (Patricia Kusimo, AEL/Edvantia; Melissa Ritter, NWREL; Kathleen Busick, PREL; Chris Ferguson, SEDL; Elise Trumbull & Guillermo Solano-Flores, WestEd. (2000). *Making assessment work for everyone: How to build on student strengths*. San Francisco: WestEd.

Intended to provide teachers “with research information and practical ideas for modifying assessments to make them more effective,” this book offers background information, activities, vignettes, and how-to’s. Available in pdf (no charge) or in print (\$20) from www.wested.org

AEL/Edvantia Measure of School Capacity for Improvement (AEL/Edvantia MSCI)

This is an assessment tool that teachers complete. It includes questions concerning attitudes about antidiscriminatory teaching. AEL/Edvantia provides the questionnaires. Schools or districts return completed questionnaires to AEL/Edvantia where they are compiled. AEL/Edvantia then provides a report of the results. Cost is dependent on district or school size. Ordering information is available at www.edvantia.org

AEL/Edvantia training for facilitators of culturally responsive schooling and teaching practices. See the AEL/Edvantia Web site (www.edvantia.org) for any upcoming training dates. Contact Rebecca Burns (Rebecca.burns@edvantia.org) for information about facilitators trained in this process.

Irvine, J., & Armento, J. (2001). *Culturally responsive teaching: Lesson planning for elementary and middle grades*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

The first two chapters of this book discuss culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum. The remaining four chapters offer examples in the form of instructional units on storytelling—grades K-2; craft patterns and geometry—grades 3-5; weather—grades 4-6; the Constitution and voting rights—grades 6-8. Available from McGraw-Hill or any bookseller at cost of \$54.69.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Based on a study of a group of excellent teachers, this book “discusses the notion of culturally relevant teaching (p. xii)” and “provides exemplars of effective teaching for African American students (p. x).” Available from Jossey-Bass or through any bookseller. Price: \$16.

Lindsey, R., Roberts, L., & Campbell-Jones, F. (2005). *The culturally proficient school: An implementation guide for school leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Contains background reading, activities, and vignettes to explore ways in which schools are organized and operate that may be to the detriment of minority students. Available from the publisher (www.corwinpress.com) or from any bookseller. Price: \$30.95.

Lindsey, R., Robins, K., & Terrell, R. (2003). *Cultural proficiency: A manual for school leaders (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Contains activities and readings that school faculties can use to become acquainted with the concept of cultural proficiency. Order online from Corwin Press (www.corwinpress.com) or from any bookseller. Price: \$39.95.

The Education Alliance at Brown University. (2002). *The diversity kit*. Providence, RI: Author.

Described as “an introductory resource for social change in education,” this kit contains background reading, activities, and vignettes to help educators “examine their beliefs, perceptions, behaviors, and educational practices with respect to diversity in education” (p. 2). The book may be downloaded (free of charge) or purchased in hard copy (\$40) from www.lab.brown.edu/tcl/diversitykit

The Education Alliance at Brown University. (n.d.). *The knowledge loom*.

This Web site, <http://knowledgeloom.org>, maintains collections of resources on a variety of education topics, one of which is culturally responsive teaching. Access is free.

Walsh, J., & Sattes, B. (2000). *Inside school improvement: Creating high-performing learning communities*. Charleston, WV: Edvantia.

A hands-on guide for people working to improve schools, this book contains school improvement processes, activities, and stories from people in schools that are improving. It may be ordered for \$35 from the publisher, www.edvantia.org

Weiss, H., Kreider, H., Lopez, M., & Chatman, C. (Eds.). (2005). *Preparing educators to involve families: From theory to practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

This is a casebook that links research, theory, and practice by offering cases for discussion that come from educators’ experiences. Intended for use by teacher educators, each case is followed by questions to guide discussion. Order it online from the publisher or through any bookseller. Price: \$34.95.

Norms for Team Discussions

(Handout)

- **Come to meetings on time and prepared.**
- **Listen attentively and respond thoughtfully.**
- **Be both honest and respectful in your comments.**
- **Acknowledge doubt.**
- **When doubtful, seek to learn more.**
- **Look for ways to apply what you learn in your daily professional life.**

Fishbowl

The fishbowl is an adaptation of the focus group—so called because, as one group of people sit in a circle and talk, remaining participants sit or stand around them and listen. “Fishbowl” can be a useful strategy when the large group includes two or more subgroups with differing perspectives. By selecting a subgroup to do the talking, the entire group stays engaged—either as discussants or observers.

The fishbowl offers a powerful way to hear from subgroups about what is important to them. As 4 to 12 people sit in a circle, the remaining group members surround them and listen. At the end of 15 to 30 minutes of discussion, speakers and listeners can change places.

This process has been successfully used with students in the inner circle responding to questions about what would help them learn better in school, and teachers as listeners. It has also been effective with community members responding to questions about what they want schools to do to help their children succeed in school, and administrators as listeners. Its value in such circumstances lies in allowing people who may feel that their views have been ignored or discounted in the past to have the opportunity to talk freely without anyone attempting to immediately counter their opinions. Some procedural tips follow:

1. Establish norms for the group (e.g., keep things confidential, speak and listen with respect, contribute when you are moved to speak, don’t use names of teachers or students).
2. Clarify the role of the outside circle members. They are to listen carefully throughout the discussion, not talking or interjecting until it is their turn to speak.
3. When people in the outside circle speak, they are asked to say only what they have heard. They are not to attempt to defend their position or react to comments.

While the goal is for listeners to repeat what they heard in order to affirm to speakers that they have, indeed, been heard, typically listeners will find it difficult not to elaborate with ways they feel the school does meet students’ needs. Facilitators need not intervene unless listeners become defensive or accusatory in their responses.

Interview Design

Interview Design is a method of data analysis in which all participants provide, gather, and analyze information. It has been used effectively in groups ranging from 10 to 500 people.

General Description

Participants gather information by interviewing one another in a round-robin process, using a predetermined set of questions. They then work in groups to analyze and report findings.

Rationale

The interview design process is

Active: No one can simply sit back and listen.

Equitable: All answers are recorded anonymously so each person's opinions are given equal consideration, regardless of his or her title or position.

Informal: The process helps people get to know one another around a substantive issue.

Objective: Interviewers do not argue or give their own opinions; they ask questions only for clarification.

Efficient: The knowledge and views of all participants on key questions are captured, so that people can see both the similarities and differences represented in the group.

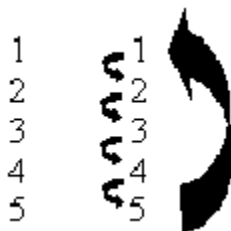
Engaging: Participants work together to summarize and analyze views expressed in the interviews.

Detailed Description of the Process

Participants are seated in rows facing one another. Each person is assigned a question that he or she will ask of every person in the facing row. If there are five questions, there are two rows of 5 chairs facing each other. If there are 30 participants, the room will contain three sets of chairs. For example,

1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5

After people have asked their question of the person facing them and recorded the response, people in one of the two rows rise and move to the next seat. The interview process is then repeated. People continue to move after each interview until they have regained their original seat.



When the interview process is complete, all those with the same question gather to summarize and analyze interview responses.

Advance Preparation

1. **Develop the questions.** The quality of the result will depend on the quality of the questions. Avoid questions that can be answered with a yes or no. Also avoid questions that invite a particular response. For example, here is a problematic question: Do you like _____? (Answer: Yes. End of interview.) Another problematic question: What are your concerns about _____? (Invites a negative response.) This question is okay, if there is a balancing question that asks for positive reactions. An effective question: Tell me about your experience with _____. (This question invites an elaborated response, while not leading the responder in any way.)
2. **Develop a handout that lists all questions with space for participants to jot notes.** In order to improve the quality of responses, you can distribute this handout and allow participants 10 minutes or so for reflection before they move to the chairs to begin the interview process.
3. **Print each question on a separate sheet of paper.** Make as many copies of each question sheet as there are people who will ask that question. In the example provided (5 questions, 3 sets of chairs), 6 people will ask question 1, so 6 copies will be needed. (It is helpful to print each question on a different color of paper. When you place the questions on the chairs, you will be able to see at a glance that they are in the correct order.)

Conducting the Activity

If possible, don't schedule this as the first or last activity of the day, unless you can be sure people will arrive on time or not leave early.

1. **Arrange the chairs.** If you must use the same space and chairs that you have used for other activities, schedule this activity after a break so that you have time to set up the interview rows. If you have an odd number of participants, add a chair to the beginning or end of the **non-moving** side of a set. The extra person will work with the person having the first or last question. One might

take notes while the other asks the question. Also, latecomers can be added in this way.

2. **Place the interview questions on the chair seats.** The people who sit in the first seat in each row will be responsible for asking question #1, people sitting in the second seat will ask question #2, etc.
3. **Distribute the handout with all questions and ask people to think about them.** Explain that they will be interviewed concerning their views. Allow no more than 5 to 10 minutes.
4. **Give instructions before asking people to move to the chair sets.** Announce which side of the sets will move in which direction. (For example, people sitting in the rows facing the windows will move when time is called. People with question #1 will move down one seat. People with the last question will move to the front of the row.) *Those who move will take their questions with them. They will **not** leave them on the seat.* Ask participants to take a pen and paper to their seats. Also, suggest that they take something with a firm surface, unless the chairs have writing surfaces.
5. **Announce the amount of time people will have to respond to each question.** Generally, 2 or 3 minutes is sufficient. Remind interviewers that they are to ask questions only to clarify their understanding of a response, and are not to express their own opinions as interviewers. Announce the start. Call time at the end of the first interview. At that point, the pair reverses roles and the interviewer is interviewed. At the end of the second time period, people in the designated rows move down a seat, and the process repeats.
6. **Circulate at the end of the first interview to catch any confusion about who moves in what direction.** You may need to remind people to take their questions with them when they move to the next seat.
7. **Time the interviews.** Generally, 2 or 3 minutes is sufficient for each interview (so that people change seats after 4 to 6 minutes). You may wish to shorten or lengthen the time as you observe the process.
8. **At the end of the interview process, ask all people with the same interview question to gather at a designated spot to analyze the responses.** Depending on your instructions, this activity will require from 10 to 20 minutes. You may ask them to identify major themes or to capture and summarize all responses, whichever is appropriate for your purposes. Results can be reported orally, written to be turned in for a summary report, or displayed on chart paper.

Participants may need another short break at the conclusion of Interview Design.

Adapted from Walsh, J., & Sattes, B. (2000). *Inside school improvement: Creating high-performing learning communities*. Charleston, WV: AEL/Edvantia.

Jigsaw

The jigsaw is used when groups are asked to read and discuss a selection that is too lengthy for everyone to read the entire selection.

Jigsaw Directions

1. Divide the reading into three to six segments that are relatively equal in length.
2. Divide people into groups of a size to match the number of segments. The groups should be as diverse as possible in terms of gender, ethnicity, race, and role group
3. Appoint one person from each group as the leader.
4. Assign each person to read one segment.
5. Give people time to read over their segment at least twice and become familiar with it.
6. Form temporary “expert groups” by having one person from each jigsaw group join others assigned to the same segment. Give expert groups time to discuss the main points of their segment.
7. Ask people to return to their groups.
8. Ask each person to present her or his segment to the group. Others in the group should ask questions for clarification.
9. After small group discussions, ask questions (prepared in advance) of the whole group in order to explore differing perspectives (e.g., What did your group find to be the most important information or the most surprising? or What questions does this reading raise for you?).

Final Word *(Facilitator Notes)*

This process is intended for use when a group has read a short article or passage. It interrupts the normal discussion rhythm in which people may build on ideas by asking questions, offering examples telling stories, or even introducing new topics. While such discussions can be productive, they may also remain shallow in exploring ideas and may favor more aggressive speakers over others.

The Final Word allots each person a given amount of time to speak about a specific passage that a group member selects from the assigned reading. Everyone has the same amount of time to respond. The benefit of this process lies in the fact that

- each person has time to reflect and can learn from other speakers' views
- no view dominates because of the amount of time given to it
- focus is kept on the specific idea selected by a group member.

Because the process will likely be unfamiliar and may be frustrating at first to people accustomed to more free-wheeling discussions, facilitators may wish to debrief the experience with the discussion group the first time they use it by asking the group to talk about its strengths and weaknesses.

Directions *(Handout)*

Read the selection you were provided and underline statements or passages that you find most interesting or thought provoking. When your group has finished reading, ask one person to read one of his or her underlined passages aloud and one person to keep time. During the next 5 minutes, other group members will, in turn, comment on the passage read aloud, allowing no more than 1 to 1½ minutes per person. When all other members have commented, the person who chose the passage will share what interested him or her about the passage. The facilitator will signal time for the next person to read aloud an underlined passage. Change time keepers when readers change, so that no one is completely excluded from participation by the need to keep time.

The purpose of this process is

- to allow everyone to be heard without interruption
- to allow people to build on one another's thinking
- to allow persons who choose a passage for comment to gain the benefit of other views before stating their own

Section II: Data Analysis and Schooling Practices

The resources and processes in this section assume a broader view of data than the view that is familiar to educators under the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 legislation. These activities include seeking the perspectives of teachers, administrators, students, parents, and community members, as well as looking at disaggregated numbers such as attendance rates and test scores.

Resources

The Education Trust Web site, <http://www2.edtrust.org/trust>

The Education Trust maintains and reports disaggregated data and publishes reports on how states are faring in their efforts to close achievement gaps.

Haycock, K. (2001). Closing the achievement gap. *Educational Leadership*, 58(6), 6-11.

Kati Haycock is the Executive Director of the Education Trust. Her article identifies the features of schools that are linked with narrowing achievement gaps.

Rothstein, R. (2004). A wider lens on the Black-White achievement gap. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 82(7), 105-110.

This article reviews the causes of achievement gaps associated with schools, families, and communities. Copies may be ordered at www.epinet.org.

Data Analysis Processes and Activities

People Graph

(Facilitator Notes)

This activity can be done before data analysis begins and again after it has been completed.

1. Find a location where people can spread out along a long wall or hallway.
2. Indicate which end of the wall or hallway represents the number 1 and which end represents 10 on a 10-point scale.
3. Ask participants to complete steps A and B.
4. Ask participants to stand along the continuum at the point that most accurately reflects their rating.
5. This is not a consensus-building activity. Diversity of viewpoints is expected.

- A. Read the statement below and decide the extent to which you agree by placing a mark on the continuum (10 = *Strongly Agree* and 1 = *Strongly Disagree*).

The school experience of our students does not challenge and support them to achieve at high levels. (Name population of interest—Haitian, Vietnamese, low-income White, rural White.)

10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree									Strongly Disagree

- B. Reflect on the statement and your rating. Jot down your thinking regarding this statement, including any evidence you have that supports the statement and any evidence that counters the statement.

It All Begins with Data

On the following pages, two different options are provided to engage school personnel in data-based discussions about the need, benefit, and work involved in creating a culturally responsive school.

Overview of Activities (Facilitator Notes)

Option 1 is a school inventory process. Items on the inventory are indicators Kathleen Cotton's 1995 research synthesis found to be present in Effective Schools. Option 1 provides school staff an opportunity to synthesize data sources in order to answer the "So what?" question.

Option 2 is a collegial investigation activity that has been adapted from the Collegial Investigation process appearing in Walsh J., & Sattes, B. (2000). *Inside School Improvement*, pp. 151-153. A facilitator should use Option 2 to help school staff understand the benefits and costs (time, resources, and effort) that will be required to create a culturally responsive school. School staff will realize that culturally responsive schooling involves more than a diversity workshop; it involves some fundamental changes in the structures of schooling. It changes

- what schools teach
- how schools teach
- how school staff interact with students, their families, and the communities from which students come

Both Option 1 and 2 require school staff to meet together to organize into groups to gather data, then for each group to meet to compile and analyze the data gathered. Finally, the faculty meets to hear reports of findings.

Option 1: It All Begins with Data

(Facilitator Notes)

Option 1 will need to be completed in a series of sessions. Before this option is selected, be sure school staff can meet frequently enough to complete all steps.

- Step 1 Review each category of the schooling practices inventory. Assign one of the four categories (Administrator–Teacher–Student–Interactions, Equity, Special Programs, Parent and Community Involvement) to each person or team. Distribute the appropriate section of the inventory to the respective person or team to complete. Teams will collect data about the school’s program or practice indicating its effectiveness. Each section of the inventory has suggestions for sources of data that may be useful in completing the inventory. Have teams agree when steps 2 through 5 will be completed and note these dates on the timeline.
- Step 2 Teams collect data to complete inventory sections.
- Step 3 Teams will analyze the data they have collected for their respective sections of the inventory, paying particular attention to how the program or practice impacts subpopulations within your school (e.g., Hispanic students, low-income students, African American students).
- Step 4 Teams will organize findings and write any needed recommendations.
- Step 5 Each team (or person) is to present findings to the school faculty, community, and/or students. Allow time for questions and discussion of findings and recommendations.

Participants will need the following handouts:

- Overview of Steps 1 through 5 (Handout A)
- Timeline (Handout B)
- Complete copy of the inventory (Handout C)

Option 1: It All Begins with Data

Process Overview *(Participant Handout A)*

- Step 1 Review schooling practices inventory categories.
- Step 2 Collect data to complete the assigned inventory section.
- Step 3 Analyze data, paying particular attention to how the program or practice impacts subpopulations within your school (e.g., Hispanic students, low-income students, African American students).
- Step 4 Organize findings and write any needed recommendations.
- Step 5 Present findings to the school faculty, community, and/or students.

Option 1: It All Begins with Data

5-Step Timeline (Participant Handout B)

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Schooling Practice	Review of All Categories	Data Collection	Data Analysis	Preparation of Findings and Recommendations	Presentations
Administrator/ Teacher/Student Interactions	Start date End date	Start date End date	Start date End date	Start date End date	Date
Equity	Start date End date	Start date End date	Start date End date	Start date End date	Date
Special programs	Start date End date	Start date End date	Start date End date	Start date End date	Date
Parent and Community Involvement	Start date End date	Start date End date	Start date End date	Start date End date	Date

Option 1: It All Begins with Data

Administrator–Teacher–Student Interactions (Participant Handout C)

In a school with high-level interactions among administrators, teachers, and students, the administrators hold high expectations of themselves, assuming responsibility for student outcomes. Administrators promote a schoolwide belief that all students can be successful learners, and they work with teachers to meet the challenge of teaching all students. Administrators recognize excellence in teaching through the use of incentives, recognition, and rewards. School staff communicate to students that they are important and valued by providing all students with warmth and caring. They also model warmth and caring for each other in the presence of students.

Place a check mark in front of each item that is present in your school. Attach or provide any additional information that is indicated.

Section 1. Administrators communicate high expectations for teacher performance.

- _____ Administrators negotiate individual professional growth goals with each teacher through the use of written supervision and evaluation procedures. (Attach written procedures, if available.)
- _____ All staff receive feedback on performance at least annually. (Attach feedback if available.)
- _____ Staff have classroom observation guidelines in advance of observation. (Attach guidelines.)
- _____ Administrators provide feedback quickly, placing emphasis on improving instruction and increasing student achievement.
- _____ Troubleshooting routines help staff gain quick resolution of instruction-related concerns. (List steps in the routine.)
- _____ Administrators are visible and accessible to
 - _____ staff (List locations.)
 - _____ students (List locations.)
 - _____ parents (List locations.)
 - _____ community members (List locations.)

Section 2. Administrators and other leaders build strong staff motivation.

- _____ School administrators and leaders give formal and informal staff recognition, with at least some rewards made publicly. (List occasions.)
- _____ School administrators and leaders use school objectives and explicit criteria (such as student achievement) as an important criterion for determining teacher success to make judgments about teachers' effectiveness in the classroom.

_____ School administrators and leaders provide incentives and rewards to teachers who expand their knowledge and expertise by taking credit classes, applying for grants, or pursuing other professional development activities. (List school-based incentives.)

_____ School administrators and leaders review school-based incentive structures periodically to insure equity and effectiveness.

Section 3. Administrators and teachers communicate high expectations to students and recognize excellent performance on a schoolwide basis.

_____ School staff know the names and something about each student they teach, including the students' strengths, interests, and needs.

_____ The school provides activities to develop good health habits and self-esteem, as well as prevention activities that address dropping out, pregnancy, drug use, and violence. (List programs.)

_____ Students are recognized and rewarded for excellence in

- a. achievement (List programs.)
- b. behavior (List programs.)
- c. other (List programs.)

_____ School-based incentives and rewards are matched to student developmental levels; they are meaningful to recipients and structured to build persistence of effort and intrinsic motivation. (List incentive or reward programs.)

_____ Requirements for awards are clear, i.e., explicit procedures are used, evaluations are based on standards rather than on comparisons with peers.

- a. achievement (List programs.)
- b. behavior (List programs.)
- c. other (List programs.)

_____ Older students have opportunities to manage their own learning and provide input into school policies and operations. (List opportunities.)

Items not checked:

Section 1:

Section 2

Section 3

What changes do we need to recommend?

Option 1: It All Begins with Data

Equity (Participant Handout C)

In a school where teachers and administrators pursue equitable practices, administrators and teacher focus on prevention of learning problems rather than on remediation. They use proven methods such as differentiated instruction and cooperative learning to promote students' learning success. Administrators and teachers gather information on ways to meet the needs of underserved groups and implement practices identified by research as promoting the achievement of high-needs groups. Teachers communicate respect for cultural plurality by recognizing and responding to culturally-based differences in learning style.

Place a check mark in front of each item that is present in your school. Attach or provide any additional information as indicated.

Section 1. Administrators and teachers provide programs and support to help high-needs students achieve school success.

- _____ Prevention/intervention programs featuring tutoring and/or small group instruction in reading are provided for students.
- _____ High-needs students are
 - _____ a. placed in comprehensive programs featuring detailed teachers manuals, curriculum materials, lesson guides, and other support materials
 - _____ b. offered systematic alternatives to traditional instruction.
 - _____ c. placed in small classes (22 or fewer students) whenever possible
 - _____ d. receive instruction in test-taking skills and are provided with strategies/activities to reduce test-taking anxiety
- _____ Students have alternative learning arrangements that engage the special interests of students (e.g., school-within-a-school, off-campus activities).
- _____ Students can participate in programs that use peer, cross-age, and volunteer tutoring and computer-assisted instruction.
- _____ Staff use pullout programs judiciously, if at all, assuring that they are intensive, brief, and designed to catch students up with their peers quickly and return them to regular classrooms.
- _____ Staff use findings from ongoing monitoring efforts to adapt instruction to students' individual needs.

Elementary schools

- _____ Curriculum emphasizes exploration, language development, and play in programs for preschoolers; kindergarten programs feature language and prereading skills using structured, comprehensive approaches. (List approaches.)
- _____ Programs and activities for high-needs students (e.g., Chapter 1) are carefully coordinated with regular classroom activities.
- _____ Retention in grade is not recommended until all other alternatives have been found inadequate.

Section 2. Administrators and teachers work to achieve equity in learning opportunities and outcomes and provide multicultural education activities as an integral part of school life.

- _____ Achievement and other student outcomes are equitably distributed. (*Look at the demographics of honor society and student council membership, as well as enrollment in honors and advanced courses in terms of race, and socioeconomic status.*)
- _____ Achievement goals for students and sub-populations in the school are clearly stated and vigorously pursued. (Goal statements)
- _____ Achievement and behavioral data is disaggregated by ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic level, to achieve clear understanding of how students of different groups are performing. (*Look at the demographics in terms of race and socioeconomic status of honor society and student council membership, as well as enrollment in honors and advanced courses.*)
- _____ Multicultural activities are fully integrated into the school curriculum, rather than restricted to one-shot or culture-of-the-month sessions. (List examples.)
- _____ Diverse groups of students are involved in multicultural activities, not just those students belonging to minority cultural groups. (List activities and participation data.)
- _____ Administrators provide ongoing support for teachers to access and use the training and materials needed to deliver high-quality multicultural education activities. (List some training opportunities and materials.)

Section 3. Administrators and teachers provide challenging academic content and English language skills for language minority students.

Administrators and teachers

- _____ offer language minority students a strong academic core program, like that provided for other students (ethnic breakdown of students participating in honor society, honor roll, gifted, AP, honors, college credit classes in your school)
- _____ identify and review promising practices for language-minority students
- _____ conduct assessment of English and native language proficiency as students enroll in the school and periodically thereafter

- _____ provide non-English-speaking (NES) students intensive English-as-a-second language instruction..
- _____ provide limited-English-proficient (LEP) students a combination of instruction in their native languages and instruction in English
- _____ engage volunteer tutors to help LEP students acquire English language literacy
- _____ group students heterogeneously by ability and language so that they can learn from one another

Items not checked:

Section 1:

Section 2

Section 3

What changes do we need to recommend?

Option 1: It All Begins with Data

Special Programs (Participant Handout C)

In a culturally responsive school, administrators and teachers recognize the need for special programs to provide support for students. School and district survey and focus group data is collected to identify specific students concerns and needs. School staff explores nontraditional methods of delivering special programs and support services (e.g., implementing dropout prevention services in settings outside of schools, such as housing developments or community centers).

Place a check mark in front of each item that is present in your school. Attach or provide any additional information that is indicated.

Section 1. Administrators and teachers identify dropout-prone students and implement activities to keep them in school.

Administrators and teachers

- _____ implement flexible programming and scheduling to accommodate students who are parents or who work during school hours
- _____ establish links with community programs to help dropout-prone students with school-to-work transition (List programs.)
- _____ form partnerships with businesses in the community and promote community-based learning (List community-based learning projects.)
- _____ secure input from dropout-prone students for designing dropout prevention/reduction activities (Conduct a fishbowl interview with dropout-prone students.)
- _____ provide students with learning activities that have real-world applications (course syllabi)
- _____ use validated practices for tobacco, alcohol, and drug prevention (List programs.)

Section 2. School leaders and staff collaborate with community agencies to support families with urgent health and/or social service needs.

School leaders and staff

- _____ Know about the array of medical and social service providers in the community and how to access them.
- _____ Know about models for school-community collaboration for needy families that have been implemented in other settings..
- _____ Work with health and social service agencies to coordinate the delivery of services to children and families. Whether or not the school is the entry point for families to seek services is a matter of local preference

- _____ Assist needy families to access appropriate health and social service facilities and providers in the community.
- _____ Identify needy children and families early in the school year and work with community agencies on prevention and intervention activities.
- _____ Engage in true collaboration with community agencies by, for example, providing office space for a social service provider whose salary is paid by an external agency.

Items not checked:

Section 1:

Section 2

What changes do we need to recommend?

Option 1: It All Begins with Data

Parent and Community Involvement (Participant Handout C)

In a school that engages parents and community members, administrators and teachers consistently communicate to parents that their involvement will enhance their children's school performance, regardless of their own level of education. Parents and community members are involved in decision making regarding school governance and school improvement efforts.

Place a check mark in front of each item that is present in your school. Attach or provide any additional information that is indicated.

Administrators and teachers involve parents and community members in supporting the instructional program.

- _____ Parents are offered several different options for their involvement, such as tutoring their children at home, assisting in classrooms, participating in parent-teacher conferences, etc. (List programs or examples and how information was publicized.)
- _____ Parents are given information and techniques for helping students learn (e.g., training sessions, handbooks, make-and-take workshops.). (List examples.)
- _____ The school establishes and maintains regular, and frequent home-school communications. This includes providing parents with information about student progress and calling attention to any areas of difficulty. (List examples.)
- _____ Community members are involved in schoolwide and classroom activities, giving presentations, serving as information resources, functioning as the audience for students' published writings, etc. (List examples.)
- _____ Parents are strongly encouraged to become involved in activities that support the *instructional* program. (List examples.)

Administrators and teachers involve parents and community members in school governance.

- _____ There are written materials that communicate clearly to parents the procedures for involvement and the procedures consistently used by parents. (List procedures and data on parent involvement.)
- _____ Parents and community members participate in school-based management teams.
- _____ There are school outreach activities, especially in culturally diverse school settings, to involve parent and community representatives from all cultural groups in the community.
- _____ Special efforts are made by the school to involve the parents of disadvantaged, racial-minority, and language-minority students, who are often underrepresented

among parents involved in the schools. (List efforts or accommodations.)

_____ The school works with cultural minority parents and community members to help children cope with any noted differences in norms between the home and the school. (List ways in which this is done.)

_____ Someone is assigned the responsibility to monitor and evaluate parent/community involvement activities and continually work to keep participation effective. (Name of person or persons)

_____ The school publishes indicators of school quality and periodically provides them to parents and community members to foster communication and stimulate public action. (Collect examples.)

_____ Business, industry, and labor are involved in helping to identify important learning outcomes and in providing opportunities to apply school learnings in workplace settings. (List examples of ongoing efforts.)

Items not checked:

Section 1:

Section 2

What changes do we need to recommend?

Option 2: It All Begins with Data

Collegial Investigation: Do the schooling practices in our school support the learning of all students?

(Facilitator Notes)

Time

This activity requires two separate meetings, each lasting approximately two hours. Participants will work on group assignments between meetings.

Purpose

It has been said that one of the best indicators of excellence in schools is an attitude of dissatisfaction with the status quo. If teachers and administrators think their school is doing a great job and if they aren't actively looking for ways to do their job better, they are not motivated to learn and apply new ideas related to teaching and learning. This activity, called a collegial investigation, provides a structure within which faculty members can study how well their school is helping all students learn to high standards.

Materials

Easel stands, pads of easel paper, markers, and masking tape
Participant handouts (for five investigatory teams)
Banner (or overhead) of the statement for investigation

Directions

Directions are written in the manner of a script for the facilitator. An actual discussion cannot be scripted, of course, because the facilitator will need to be prepared to move in the directions established by the participants.

Use the following script only as a guide to help you prepare for the meetings.

Adapted with permission from Walsh, J. A., & Sattes, B. D. (2000). *Inside School Improvement: Creating High-Performing Learning Communities*.

Meeting 1: Preliminary Assessment of Beliefs

School staff should make an informed decision about whether or not culturally responsive instruction is appropriate. A commitment to culturally responsive schooling should be made with eyes wide open about the costs—not just the benefits.

If we believe that what we are now doing in our school is *not* working for all of our students, then we need to have the courage to try something new. Culturally responsive schooling offers that potential.

The school's decision should be thoughtful, one in which the pros and cons are weighed, and decisions are based on evidence as to the effectiveness of our school program as it currently exists (both the good and the bad!). We are proposing to explore together, over the course of the next three weeks, how well our school is meeting the needs of all our students. We want to determine if we agree or disagree with the following focus statement:

The curriculum, schooling practices, and teaching strategies in our schools do not encourage and support all ethnic and socioeconomic groups' learning to high standards.

If we affirm this statement (i.e., if we believe that *all* of our students are not well served by our current methods of teaching), then we want to proceed to the next question: Does culturally responsive schooling have the potential to improve teaching and learning in our school in significant ways?

As we study this issue, we plan to use a process for group decision making called Collegial Investigations. In our discussions, we want to talk—openly and honestly—about how well the school is serving our students.

What do we believe about this statement—individually and collectively—and why?

Before we begin a discussion of our beliefs and opinions about this focus statement, let me ask you to reflect privately. Think about how you would honestly rate our school's preparation of students—all students. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Now, jot down the reasons why you made that judgment.

Allow three minutes for quiet reflection.

Imagine a line extending across this side of the room ranging from “Strongly Agree” through “Neither Agree nor Disagree” to “Strongly Disagree” and choose a place to stand along this continuum.

It would be helpful to have posted these terms along one side of the room so that participants have visual cues as to where to stand. Be sure to allow time for

participants to see where the majority of people stand—a visual representation of feelings of satisfaction with the status quo.

Why did you respond as you did? Talk to one other participant about why each of you rated the school as you did.

Allow adequate time for people to talk to one another in pairs. At a later time in the discussion, we will ask them to share their reasons with the larger group. You might ask at this point for people to share any insights they had as they saw how colleagues “rated” their school.

Part 1: Preliminary Discussion and Introduction of the Elements of Reasoning

As we conduct our investigation of our focus statement/question, we will rely on elements of reasoning as articulated by Richard Paul, a professor of critical thinking at Sonoma State University. These elements are at the heart of the process of Collegial Investigations, as developed at AEL/Edvantia.

Note to the facilitator: During the ensuing discussion, your purpose is to evoke thoughtful dialogue on the topic. We suggest you use the elements of reasoning as a tool for the discussion. The elements are presented below in sequence, but rarely do they appear sequentially in a real discussion. Facilitators should carefully review the elements before the discussion and be ready to move from one to another as the discussion proceeds. It is important, during this preliminary discussion, to help participants consider the first six elements; suggestions to that end are noted below. The last two elements—consequences and conclusions—will be more heavily used in the discussion **after** evidence has been collected.

It would be helpful to make a large graphic of these eight elements. As each participant speaks, point to the appropriate element for clarification. For example, if you need to clarify a term for the group, you can point to the element, as you ask for a definition; if people speak strictly from a teacher’s point of view and you think it would be helpful for the group to consider a student’s perspective, point to the element point of view. The elements are

- Purpose
- Focus issue
- Concepts
- Point of view
- Assumptions
- Evidence
- Consequences and implications
- Conclusions

1. The first element is **purpose**. Richard Paul says it is important to identify the purpose of our discussion: Why are we having this discussion?

Allow time for responses. If none are forthcoming, suggest a purpose to the group: to make a determination of whether or not culturally responsive instruction will improve the teaching and learning processes at our school.

2. We frequently get engaged in discussions without clearly identifying the focus Issue. Paul recommends that we be explicit in identifying what the issues are. What specific questions are we trying to answer as we discuss the statement before us, “The curriculum, practices, and teaching strategies in our schools do not encourage and support all ethnic and socioeconomic groups learning to high standards.”

Allow time for participants to think. Ask them to write down the questions that they have; have index cards available for writing individual questions. Allow time for sharing questions in small groups before opening it up for large group discussion. Questions such as the following may be posed:

- How well are our students learning? Do we need to change something—or are we satisfied with the way things are?
- How many of our students are truly engaged in their learning?
- Are our current teaching strategies effective?
- Are students learning the things that will be required of them in the world beyond our school?

The questions at issue do not have to be fully exhausted at this time. Throughout the discussion, participants may continue to shed light on the identifying questions that they really want to try to answer in this investigation. The facilitator should record the questions at issue—on a separate easel pad—as they emerge.

3. In order to have a meaningful discussion, we must consciously and clearly define our **concepts**. Language—the words and phrases that we use to communicate—strongly influences our thinking about any given issue. Sometimes when people find themselves in disagreement, it is because they haven’t stopped to clarify concepts and ideas; they are talking about the same thing but they have different working definitions. In our discussion today, I have heard some of the following terms used. Can we agree on their meanings?

What do we mean by *traditional, discipline-based approach*?

What do we mean by *adequately*?

What is included in the terms *curriculum and instruction*? Can we agree on that?

Writing the concepts on a blackboard or easel chart will help to focus attention on a given concept. Throughout the entire discussion (not just this segment), be alert for key ideas and words that may not have a common meaning among group members. Write these words under the heading “Concepts” and see if the group can agree on a working definition.

4. **Point of view** refers to where we are coming from as we engage in reasoning about a particular problem or question. Paul maintains that our point of view, or frame of reference, regarding a particular question is usually biased or colored to some extent by who we are, what we value, what we do, what experiences we’ve had, and so forth. It is essential that we not only be aware of our own point of view, but also recognize how this frame of thinking influences our thinking. It is helpful, in keeping an open mind, to try to understand the points of view of others.

Clearly, we have been speaking from the point of view of *teachers* in our school. What other points of view need to be considered?

Allow time for participants to think. If people have spoken from the perspective of other role groups, mention them to the group now. As they volunteer other points of view, ask them to project what light that perspective sheds on these questions at issue. Challenge them to consider, at a minimum, the following points of view:

- **Students.** How would our students rate our school? Would students think that they are adequately prepared by the courses offered here? Are they interested and engaged in what is taught? Are they learning? Are they learning what is important? Do they believe that what is taught is important? Can they see connections to the real world?
- **Low-achieving students.** What about the special populations of students in our school who are poor performers? How would they rate our school in terms of preparing them for “life after school?” What are these students’ needs? What are we doing to help meet these needs? What do we do that ignores their needs?
- **Parents.** Do parents of our students believe that student needs are met? Would parents be open to nontraditional ways of teaching and learning? What do parents believe is important for their students to be learning in preparation for the world of work—or the world of higher education?

- **Business community.** Are most members of the business community satisfied with what our graduates know and can do? Are our students recognized as having mastered basic and essential skills? Does the business community consider our students to be good thinkers?
 - **Other points of view?**
5. **Assumptions** are the beginning points in our reasoning. Clarifying our assumptions helps us understand what things we take for granted. It is important that we always be able to state clearly the assumptions that we are making about a given issue prior to the beginning of our formal thinking about it. Having stated the assumptions aloud, we can then determine if they are clear, correct, justifiable, necessary, and consistent. What are our assumptions about the issue under consideration?

Allow time for participants to reflect. Remember that once the idea of assumptions has been introduced to the group, your job as facilitator is to help people identify the assumptions behind some of their assertions. Anytime participants make statements, look for unspoken assumptions and help them to identify them. Some examples are as follows:

- Do we believe that all students can learn? That all students in our school can become better prepared for life in the 21st century?
 - Is it the responsibility of schools to meet all students' learning needs?
 - Do we believe that what we do (by way of teaching) is important? Does it make a difference to students?
 - Are we satisfied with the status quo? If we don't think we are doing the job of "**adequately** meeting the needs of **all** students," does that mean we haven't been doing a good job? Do we need to defend "what we've got?"
 - Does our school really need to change? Do the curriculum, schooling practices, and teaching strategies in our school encourage and support all ethnic and socioeconomic groups' learning to high standards ?
6. We reach conclusions about any given idea based on **evidence**. Evidence is the information, data, and experiences that we use in our reasoning that helps us reach a conclusion. What evidence do we have as we reach conclusions about the statement before us? We all expressed opinions at the beginning of this investigation as we formed a people graph across the room. What evidence did we have for these opinions and beliefs?

Ask participants to share why they made their initial "people graph" ratings about the school. As they report out, look for concrete evidence and make a listing of the evidence people used in making a judgment.

Ask participants what evidence is available, that they currently don't have access to, that would help them make a more informed decision about whether or not the school is currently meeting the needs of **all** students. Make a listing of the desired evidence on an easel pad or blackboard in plain sight of the discussants. There are no right or wrong answers here. You can anticipate that group members will suggest some of the following sources as evidence, but this list is in no way intended to be exhaustive:

- graduation rate
 - attendance rate
 - grade point average of students
 - standardized test scores
 - polls of graduates—rate of success in college, rate of success in finding and holding a job
 - parental satisfaction surveys
 - teacher lesson plans (to help identify current ways of teaching)
 - homework completion
 - classroom observations (to help identify current ways of teaching)
 - numbers of discipline referrals
 - information about how curriculum offerings are selected
7. What are the **consequences and implications** if our focus statement is true? What are the implications if the statement is not true? Implications (or consequences) are the “so what?” or logical outcomes of the conclusions we reach. They are what follow from our interpretation of the particular issue or problem at hand. We can think of a consequence as something that will logically flow from the conclusion we reach. For example, if we believe this statement is true—The curriculum, schooling practices, and teaching strategies in our school do not encourage and support all ethnic and socioeconomic groups’ learning to high standards—then one implication is that we need to *change* something about our current way of teaching.
 8. **Conclusions** are reached by interpreting the evidence on hand related to the questions at issue. Before we started this discussion, we asked group members to share their opinions on this statement. Those initial opinions may or may not have been based on convincing or solid evidence. We are suggesting that in a reasoned discussion—one in which we question our assumptions and clarify the questions and concepts—we may turn up evidence that supports or refutes our initial opinions. Our task now, as a group, is to identify sources of data (or evidence) that will help us reach a more informed conclusion than our initial beliefs.

Part 2: Selection of Investigatory Roles

In just a few minutes, each of you will join a team for the purpose of collecting data over the next week about the issue under study: Under our current approach to curriculum and

instruction, is our school encouraging and supporting all ethnic and socioeconomic groups' learning to high standards? We will organize ourselves into five teams, and each team will use distinctly different sources of data. Let me first describe the five types of teams—philosophers, analysts, surveyors, people watchers, and story tellers—and then ask each of you to select the team that you would most like to join. (Post the five team names around the room.)

1. The **philosophers'** job is to review expert opinion. Their primary tasks are to critically read selected articles or excerpts from books, to thoughtfully analyze those readings, to discuss the expert ideas with other team members, and to draw some conclusions based upon their readings. Philosophers may consider chapters one and two, and the resources for those chapters listed in Chapter 4. However, you need not limit your reading to these selections. We suggest you browse through the suggested readings, choose what looks appropriate, look in other professional journals, and talk to colleagues for suggestions.
2. The **analysts'** focus is on historical or archival records—existing data sources that need additional analysis or interpretation. The responsibility of the analysts is to identify existing information and data sources that may shed light on the issue under study and to analyze these in a manner that will allow the team to draw meaning and inferences. There is no limit to the data from which analysts can select—ranging from attendance records to minutes of PTA meetings. The real challenge will be in delimiting the sources of data to use.
3. **Surveyors** will, as their name implies, gather data through surveys. They will formulate appropriate questions; pose them to selected audiences via surveys or interviews; and tabulate, analyze, and interpret the data collected. The surveyors may choose to collect *perceptual* data (that is, what people believe about whether or not all students are learning what is important to learn). Or they may choose to collect data about *actual behaviors* (for example, students' job performance after graduation). Surveyors try to answer the following questions: Who is important to survey on this topic? What are the perceptions, attitudes, and opinions of these people (teachers, students, parents, board members, community businesses, and others)?
4. **People watchers** are observers. Their mission is to identify the individuals and groups whose behavior might speak loudly regarding the questions at issue. Primary among these should be students. But team members may also decide to focus attention upon teachers, parents, graduates, and/or community members. Most often, people watchers will conduct shadow studies; that is, they will observe their subjects in action.
5. **Storytellers** use the wisdom of practice to inform our study. They reflect on their own experiences and craft stories that will shed some light. They may also choose to solicit stories from other teachers and from students, graduates, and local business people who have hired graduates from our school. They are looking for stories that describe a telling moment or a critical incident, focus on an achievement or disappointment, distill an ageless principle or truth, or focus upon a simple technique or renewed understanding.

Ask participants to think about which investigatory team they would most like to join. Ask all participants to write their top two choices on an index card. After

everyone has selected two teams ask participants to go to designated tables. If the teams are disproportionately selected, ask for volunteers to go to their second choice. It is not important that all teams have equal numbers; however, it is important that no group be too large or too small.

After participants have organized themselves into teams, give each team the one-page description of the team's role and responsibilities along with ideas for investigations.

Your final task before we are dismissed today is to read through the description of your team and decide what evidence your team members want to collect and how. We will ask each team for a brief report before we adjourn.

Allow at least 20 minutes. Move around to all five teams to be sure they understand the assignment and can think of data that would help them address one or more questions at issue.

Philosophers *(Handout)*

The job of the **philosophers** is to review expert opinion. Their primary tasks are to critically read selected articles or excerpts from books, to thoughtfully analyze those readings, to discuss the expert ideas with other team members, and to draw some conclusions based upon their readings. Philosophers may consider Chapters 1 and 2, and the resources for those chapters listed in Chapter 4. However, you need not limit your reading to these selections. We suggest you browse through the suggested readings, choose what looks appropriate, look in other professional journals, and talk to colleagues for suggestions.

Analysts *(Handout)*

Analysts focus on historical or archival records—existing data sources that need additional analysis or interpretation. The responsibility of the analysts is to identify existing information and data sources that may shed light on the issue under study and to analyze these in a manner that will allow the team to draw meaning and inferences. There is no limit to the data from which analysts can select—ranging from attendance records to minutes of PTA meetings. The real challenge will be in delimiting the sources of data to use.

Surveyors (Handout)

Surveyors will, as their name implies, gather data through surveys. They will formulate appropriate questions; pose them to selected audiences via surveys or interviews; and tabulate, analyze, and interpret the data collected. The surveyors may choose to collect *perpetual* data (that is, what people believe about whether or not all students are learning what is important to learn). Or they may choose to collect data about *actual behaviors* (for example, students' job performance after graduation). Surveyors try to answer the following questions: Who is important to survey on this topic? What are the perceptions, attitudes, and opinions of these people (teachers, students, parents, board members, community businesses, and others)?

People Watchers *(Handout)*

People watchers are observers. Their mission is to identify the individuals and groups whose behavior might speak loudly regarding the questions at issue.

Primary among these should be students. But team members may also decide to focus attention on teachers, parents, graduates, and/or community members. Most often, people watchers will conduct shadow studies; that is, they will observe their subjects in action.

Storytellers *(Handout)*

Storytellers use the wisdom of practice to inform our study. They reflect on their own experiences and craft stories that will shed some light. They may also choose to solicit stories from other teachers and from students, graduates, and local business people who have hired graduates from our school. They are looking for stories that describe a telling moment or a critical incident, focus on an achievement or disappointment, distill an ageless principle or truth, or focus upon a simple technique or renewed understanding.

Meeting 2: Data Analysis and Conclusion *(Facilitator Notes)*

Part 1: Data analysis

All five teams should have collected data by this meeting. During this meeting, participants will gather with fellow team members to consider the data they have collected, and come to some shared understanding of what these data mean. Allow about one hour for this analysis. It might help to review the eight elements of reasoning so that the groups can monitor their own use of the elements as they proceed. The facilitator should move among all five groups to see if they need assistance.

Part 2: Final Discussion: Conclusions and Implications

We have been studying in our separate teams and it is time now to share our teams' findings with the large group. Each team should choose one representative to share findings so that we can continue the discussion we began at our last meeting.

Before inviting discussion, review the focus statement—The curriculum, practices, and teaching strategies in our schools do not encourage and support all ethnic and socioeconomic groups' learning to high standards— and revisit some of the questions at issue. Or, pose a question such as, “What have you learned that sheds light on whether or not our curriculum, practices, and teaching strategies. . . .”

Discussion Method 1. In preparation for this meeting, the facilitator should have arranged six chairs in the center of the room. Team representatives will sit in five of the six chairs. Discussion rules are as follows: Outside participants are observers. Their role is to listen attentively to the discussion, which should be guided by the elements of reasoning. To make a comment, observers may stand behind their own group's representative; this lets the group know that another voice wants to be heard. To join the discussion, an observer should sit in the extra seat. Soon after a new participant enters the fishbowl, the representative from the team that now has two members should join the large group of observers. In this way, one seat remains available for another observer to join the discussion.

Discussion Method 2. Ask each team representative to report team findings. This method keeps control of the discussion in the facilitator's hands.

Part 3: Final Assessment of Beliefs

After this intensive discussion and study, have our beliefs changed? I would like for you to reflect on our focus statement”

The curriculum, practices, and teaching strategies in our school do not encourage and support all ethnic and socioeconomic groups’ learning to high standards.

Think about how you would honestly rate our school. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Now jot down the reasons why you made that judgment.

Allow three minutes for quiet reflection.

Again, I want you to imagine a line across this side of the room ranging from “Strongly Agree” through “Neither Agree nor Disagree” to “Strongly Disagree,” and choose a place to stand along this continuum.

It would be helpful to have these terms posted along one side of the room so that participants have visual cues as to where to stand. Be sure to allow time for participants to see where the majority of people stand—a visual representation of feelings of satisfaction with the status quo.

Why did you respond as you did? Talk to one other participant about why each of you rated the school as you did.

Allow adequate time for people to talk to one another in pairs. You might ask at this point for people to share any insights they had as they saw how colleagues rated their school. You might also ask for volunteers to share with this group—those whose ratings had stayed the same, those who learned some new things about the students in their school, etc.

Assuming a general trend in the ratings toward dissatisfaction with the school’s current methods of teaching and learning, proceed with a discussion of the **implications** of this conclusion.

Part 4: Consequences and Implications

Using the data collected by one or more groups, lead the group in a discussion of the implications of their findings. Pose one or more of the following questions for discussion:

- If we were to undertake culturally responsive schooling, how would our lives as teachers change?

- What supports would we need in order to make a successful transition into culturally responsive instruction as a regular way of teaching and learning? Is the administration committed? Are administrators willing to find a way to provide the supports we would need?
- What are the potential benefits to students in a school where instructional approaches and curriculum materials are designed to build on the strengths and cultures reflected in our student body? How might these benefits be related to testing? College entry?
- How can we involve students and parents in making this decision for our school?
- Are any of us already applying culturally responsive teaching strategies at some level? How is it working? Do we know any other schools that have tried culturally responsive schooling? What is their advice?
- Where would we begin? Who of us should begin? Should we implement in phases? Should we have a trial year? A year of study? Do we need more information?

Section III: Cultural Proficiency

The resources, activities, and processes in this section help teachers develop an understanding of culture as it shapes their students and themselves.

Resources

Beagle, D. (2003, October/November). Overcoming the silence of generational poverty. *Talking Points*, 15(1), pp. 11-19.

This article reports the results of a qualitative study that included interviews with 25 college graduates who grew up in generational poverty. It provides a compelling picture of what life is like for poor children at home and school. This article is available to members of the National Council of Teachers of English on the NCTE Web site.

Ben-Yosef, E. (2003, October). Respecting students' cultural literacies. *Educational Leadership*, pp. 80-82.

Ben-Yosef writes about coming to understand the concept of cultural literacies when for a graduate class assignment he created a collection of information about the literacy events and practices of the local Orthodox Jewish community.

Cushman, K., & the Students of What Kids Can Do. (2003). *Fires in the bathroom: Advice for teachers from high school students*. New York: The New Press.

This book includes accounts of low-income and minority students' experiences in school, both positive and negative, and what they want teachers to know and be able to do. It also includes activities to help teachers consider their own attitudes and practices. Order from The New Press or any bookseller. Price: \$25 hardback or \$15 paperback

Taylor, O. (1990). *Cross-cultural communication: An essential dimension of effective education* (rev.). Chevy Chase, MD: Mid-Atlantic Equity Center.

This book is available in its entirety online at www.maec.org/cross/index.

We particularly recommend a table titled Examples of Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Contrasts among Some African Americans and Some Anglo Americans. It can be found at www.maec.org/cross/table4.html.

National Education Association. (2002/2003). *CARE: Strategies for closing the achievement gaps*.

This pdf file can be accessed at www.nea.org/teachexperience/careguide.html. It offers activities and tools teachers can use with students and with their colleagues.

Processes and Activities

Our Cultural and Educational Experiences (Facilitator's Notes)

Purpose

This activity has several purposes:

1. It allows staff members to reflect on their own cultural and educational experiences and consider how those experiences influence the way they view the world and teach.
2. It helps staff members recognize and appreciate the diversity of life experience among the staff and students in their school.
3. It helps staff get to know one another better.

In this activity staff members:

- discuss “culture”
- interview each other in pairs about their cultural and educational experiences
- introduce one another, based on the interview questions
- discuss their cultural and educational experiences and reflect how those experiences influence the way they teach

Instructions for Use: This activity can be used at a staff gathering such as a staff meeting or an in-service day. Any staff member can guide the activity, but he or she should be a neutral facilitator and not participate in the conversation. The facilitator should read the activity description carefully beforehand and modify it if necessary, to suit the school staff's needs and experiences.

Things to Consider: Because an individual's culture and education experiences are closely connected to his or her values and beliefs, facilitating a meaningful conversation about either can be tricky. To create a more comfortable environment, you might do the following:

- Ponder the reflection questions on the handout that accompanies this activity before you present them to the staff, and be willing to model high-quality discussion by sharing relevant experiences with the group.
- Explain to the staff that topics such as culture, educational experiences, and culturally responsive teaching and learning are quite complex and sometimes difficult to talk about. But today the group will try to explore the issues in a nonthreatening way.
- Have the group set a few simple “ground rules” for discussion at the beginning of the activity. Ground rules may include: (a) showing mutual respect, (b) accepting each person's experiences as true and valid and not to be debated, (c) each person has the right to pass and (d) confidentiality. Another version of discussion norms can be found in the general tools and resources section of this chapter.

Materials, Tools, and Resources

- Our Cultural and Educational Experiences (Participant Handout A)
- Reflection Questions (Participant Handout B)
- Flip chart and markers or chalkboard

Time

At least 1.5 hours; more time is preferable.

Steps for Activity

1. Set a positive tone for the activity: welcome staff, introduce yourself, explain the purpose of the activity (see aim), set ground rules, etc. (5 minutes)
2. Write the word *culture* on a chalkboard or flip chart. Ask staff to define culture; record all responses. Your list might include race, ethnicity, gender, religion, class background, sexual orientation, where you live, beliefs/values, family structure. (5 minutes)

Validate all responses and conclude by sharing the following definition:

<p style="text-align: center;">Culture</p> <p>The integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of a racial, ethnic, religious, or social group.</p>
--

3. Tell staff members that they will have an opportunity to get to know one another better through interviews. (20 minutes)

Have staff members pair up with someone they don't know well. Pass out interview questions. (Note: There are many rich topics on the handout. You will want to select the topics you want them to talk about beforehand, depending on the amount of time you have.)

Since most people will have much they can say about each topic, both people in an interview pair should talk in turn about one topic before moving to the next so that time does not run out before the second person gets to talk.

Tell participants that after the interviews, they will be responsible for introducing their partner to the group in the following way: Their partner's name, grade level/role within school, and something that stood out about them during the interview. Allow 12 to 15 minutes total for the pairs to interview each other.

4. After the interview, have the partners introduce one another to the group. (10 minutes)
5. After everyone has been introduced, lead a discussion about how cultural heritage and educational experiences influence the way one views the world and how one teaches. Allow about 20 minutes for discussion, or more, if time permits. To promote dialogue, post the following questions:
 - How does your cultural background or life experience influence your work?
 - In terms of culture, what do you need to know about your students to create a rigorous and meaningful learning environment for them?
 - What type of staff interactions and program/classroom experiences do your students need to be successful?

Wrapup

1. Distribute Handout B, "Self-Assessment on Culture, Self, and Systems." Explain that the assessment is designed to help them think about the skills and aptitudes related to culture that are necessary to successfully implement culturally responsive, standards-based instruction. Direct them to rate themselves on each item on the scale, then choose one of the competencies that they have rated as developing, and identify tools they can use to improve in that area. Ask for volunteers to share items and tools. (20 minutes)
2. Thank staff members for being willing to share their life experiences and learn from one another. Ask that they commit to using one of the tools they have identified to develop their competence in an area they have checked as developing on the self-assessment scale. Encourage them to continue their conversations about culture and to extend the conversations into their classrooms.
3. Use or share the following creative extensions as appropriate.

Creative Extensions

- Have a guest facilitator who is experienced in cultural or equity issues lead this conversation with you.
- Have staff members write a “teacher story” based on the interview questions.
- Have teachers find a creative way to display their writings. Ideas might include a bulletin board at the school or district office or a desktop publication.
- During the interview, allow staff to use markers, paint, or crayons to express their cultural background and experiences. Ask staff to display their art in their classroom or to do a group exhibit at the school.
- Staff members can modify the reflection questions on the handout and do a similar “get to know you” activity with students in their classrooms. Not only will the activity allow students to get to know one other better, it will help staff members get to know their students better.
- As Part 2 for this activity: Give staff members disposable cameras and ask them to create a photographic or pictorial essay of their home culture. What people, activities, or objects make up their current cultural context? Then have them creatively display photos, drawn object, pictures, words, and narratives to communicate their cultural framework with the larger group. Teachers could do a similar activity with students.

Adapted with permission from Keisha Edwards et al. (In press.) *Classrooms to community and back: Using culturally responsive standards-based (CRSB) teaching to strengthen family and community partnerships and increase student achievement.*

Interview Topics

(Handout A)

- Introduce yourself. Share your name, the school or program you are with, your role, and what you hope to get out of the conversation.
- Describe the cultural situation you grew up in. Think about where you lived, your class, socioeconomic status, ethnic or cultural background, religious or spiritual tradition, gender, and the ways in which these influenced you.
- What were your educational experiences as a youth? What were you successful at, and why? What did you struggle with, and why? As a youth, how did your home/family culture support your school success? Did your home/family culture ever clash with school culture? If so, how?
- Describe your cultural situation today. How do you identify racially or ethnically? Who is your family? To what socioeconomic culture do you belong? What spirituality do you practice? Where do you live and why? How do these aspects of your life influence your work?
- Think about the youth in your program or the students at your school. What do you know about their home/family/community culture? What do you need to know to create a rigorous and meaningful learning environment for them?
- If you were a youth in your program or the students at your school, what type of staff interactions and program experiences would you need to be successful?

Self-Assessment on Culture, Self, and Systems

(Handout B)

Culturally responsive teachers hold a set of skills and knowledge that includes the valuing of diversity, the capacity for cultural self-assessment, a consciousness of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact, the ability to embed cultural diversity and responsiveness into all aspects of a school or classroom, and the ability to implement different interactions and behaviors in response to cultural diversity. (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989)

Table 2. Core Competencies for CRSB Teaching: Self-Assessment on Culture, Self, and Systems			
Rating Scale: D = Developing, M = Meeting, E = Exceeding			
Culture, Self, and Systems	(D)	(M)	(E)
I understand the role that culture plays in our society.			
I understand my own cultural heritage/background.			
I feel comfortable sharing my cultural background and perspective with my students.			
I recognize the norms and values of the dominant culture.			
I understand how our U.S. history and institutions such as the media, families, the formal education system, etc., influence the way people perceive one another.			
I understand power dynamics in regard to race, culture, and ethnicity.			
I recognize institutional biases.			
I understand how personal assumptions and biases work.			
I am aware of how socioeconomic factors affect educational expectations and opportunity for my students.			
I can negotiate cultural differences.			
I strive to be culturally competent and responsive with my students and in my classroom.			

What strengths do you have related to “culture, self, and systems” that will enable you to bring your students’ home, family, or community culture into your classroom?
Which competency areas need improvement?

What are the various teaching tools that you could use to help you to improve in those areas (read a particular book, take a workshop or course, get a mentor, observe other teachers, practice with reflection, etc.)?

Choose one area for improvement and make a plan of action to gain or improve that skill.

Interview Design Activity

(Facilitator Notes)

The questions below can be used with an Interview Design process to help educators reflect on their beliefs. You will find directions for Interview Design in the general tools and resources section of this chapter. Use the number of questions that best fit the needs of the participants who will be involved in the Interview Design process.

A. Schooling Practices. “We often forget that, for many children, academic learning is not a primary valued task. It is the positive relationships and sense of belonging that a good school culture provides that give these children the comfort, confidence, competence and motivation to learn.” (Comer, J. (2005). Child and adolescent development: The critical missing focus in school reform. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 86(10), pp. 757-763)

1. What three or four factors do you believe schools can provide that will help students succeed academically?
2. What ideas do you have for helping teachers become more aware of their beliefs and behaviors regarding their expectations for students who have historically underachieved?

B. Power of Language. “Teachers should recognize that the linguistic form a student brings to school is intimately connected with loved ones, community, and personal identity. To suggest that this form is wrong or, even worse, ignorant, is to suggest that something is wrong with the student and his or her family.” (Delpit, L. (1996). *Other people’s children: Cultural conflict in the classroom*. New York: The New Press, p. 53)

1. What are the implications of this statement for teacher interactions with African American students?
2. What ideas do you have for resolving the tension between Delpit’s statement and the need to help all students learn standard English?

C. Culturally Relevant Curriculum. “A dominant culture . . . pervades the specific content of the subject matters in different ways; for example, (a) preferring literature that expresses perspectives and experiences of males and people of European descent and (b) accepting the knowledge in textbooks over teachers’ and students’ own study and experience. As a result, a curriculum centered around the dominant culture ignores much valuable knowledge and silences many knowledgeable voices.” (Oakes, J., & Lipton, M. (1999). *Teaching to change the world*. New York: McGraw-Hill, p. 138)

1. What do you believe to be three to four implications of the last sentence in the above quote for the learning and achievement of students of color?

2. Given that most textbooks do not incorporate content that “speaks to all students equally,” what two to three strategies can teachers use to help students made connections between their own personal lives and cultures and the concepts, ideas, and skills they must master to meet academic standards?

D. Cultural Proficiency. “Diversity is the goal of helping all students develop to the fullest their unique and personal potential by varying instruction, assessment, and content to both support students in the use of their own resources and challenge them to acquire and understand the resources of others.” (Strong, R., Silver, H., & Perini, M. (2001). *Teaching what matters most: Standards and strategies for raising student achievement*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, pp 66-67)

1. What are the two to three most common barriers teachers face in attempting to reach the goal of teaching to a diverse society?
2. Share three to five specific strategies that you have successfully used in “helping all students develop to the fullest their unique and personal potentials.”

E. Developing a Community of Learners. “The responsibility for teaching and learning was not meant to fall on a single individual, but should be shared in a strong and positive school community with fundamentally communitarian norms intended to promote close and caring relationships, trust, respect, common purpose, and mutual support.” (Oakes, J., Quartz, K., Ryan, S., & Tipton, M. (1999). *Becoming good American schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p. 47)

1. What are four to five implications of the above statement for teaching and learning within the classroom?
2. What are four to five implications of this statement for teachers working together within a school?

Using the Tools of Cultural Proficiency

The First Tool, Descriptive Language: The Cultural Proficiency Continuum (Facilitator Notes)

The Cultural Proficiency Continuum provides language for describing both healthy and nonproductive policies, practices, and behaviors. Six points along the cultural proficiency continuum indicate unique ways of seeing and responding to difference. Use the continuum when discussing a particular situation or a specific policy, or when articulating why someone's behavior is inappropriate. The continuum provides a perspective for examining policies, practices, and procedures in a school by giving reference points and a common language for describing historical or current situations. It will be easy to assign a point on the cultural proficiency continuum to events that have resulted in people being murdered, maimed, or exploited by dominant and destructive groups. Identifying how students' opportunities have been preempted, denied, limited, or enhanced, however, may be more difficult to categorize. So take the time to practice with your colleagues by describing situations, events, and policies as they arise.

Materials:

- Several pieces of chart paper
- Large Post-it notes or index cards (about 13 for each group)
- Rolling Meadows Middle School vignette (Handout A, one copy for each participant) and instructions (Handout B, one copy for each participant). Be sure to place a number in each circle on the vignette to identify remarks before the vignette is duplicated.
- The Cultural Proficiency Continuum (Handout C, one copy for each participant)
- Continuum points cutouts. Duplicate cutouts on tag board. Place each cutout on a wall or large surface to replicate the continuum at the bottom of the handout.

Procedure:

- Divide participants into small groups of 3 to 5 people.
- Provide participants with copies of Handouts A, B, and C.
- Ask participants to follow the instructions on Handout B.

Permission for use has been requested.

Lindsey, R., Roberts, L., & Campbell-Jones, F. (2005). *The culturally proficient school: An implementation guide for school leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, p. 94.

Rolling Meadows Middle School Vignette

(Handout A)

The teachers at Rolling Meadows Middle School have heard that the district is going to hire some consultants to assess their cultural sensitivity. They are neither impressed nor pleased. Sitting in the teachers' lunch room, they speak wistfully about when their own children attended the district, failing to acknowledge that the demographics have been changing dramatically.

In one corner of the room we hear: "This is America, everyone should speak English; they should be adapting to us. This is reverse discrimination. We didn't do anything to those people, why do we have to change?"

"Our goal for examining our school policy on student grouping must be to enhance student achievement. If we get some good consultants in here, they can help us to disaggregate these test data. Then we can really understand student needs."

"Why are we trying to fix something that's not broken? When I walk into a classroom, I do not see color, ability or gender, I only see children"

"I believe that conflict is natural and normal; I'm glad we will be learning how to do things differently when conflict occurs."

Across the room, some teachers are discussing their students:

"I didn't know his father was gay. He doesn't look gay to me."

"She catches well for a girl."

"I can't believe my Japanese boys only scored in the 80th percentile!"

Over by the copier, some of the teachers are trying to be proactive:

"We need a Korean vice principal to help us with the Korean students."

"We celebrate Cinco de Mayo and Martin Luther King's birthday. What holiday can we use for American Indians?"

"Let's look at the school calendar to make sure we don't schedule our potlucks during Ramadan, Rīdvan, or Yom Kippur."

Permission for reprinting has been requested.

From Lindsey, R., Roberts, L., & Campbell-Jones, F. (2005). *The culturally proficient school: An implementation guide for school leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, p. 94.

Vignette Instructions

(Handout B)

Discussion Questions

1. Read the teachers' statements in the Rolling Meadows Middle School vignette.
2. Place each remark's number on the continuum at the bottom of Handout C where you believe it best fits.
3. Your group should decide where each remark should be plotted. Discuss your placement of each remark with the members of your group. Once you have arrived at a consensus, have someone from your group place each remark's number on the corresponding point on the continuum on the wall.

Group Reflection:

4. Is there consensus about each remark? Are there major discrepancies in where certain remarks were placed? Why might such discrepancies exist?

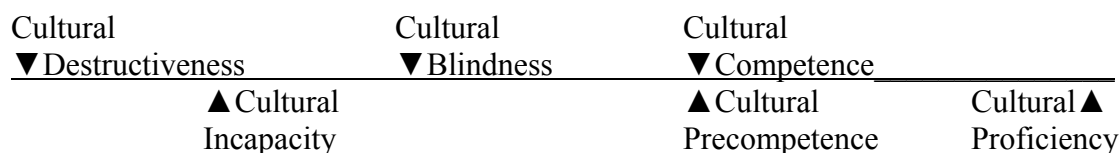
Permission for use has been requested.

Adapted from Lindsey, R., Roberts, L., & Campbell-Jones, F. (2005). *The culturally proficient school: An implementation guide for school leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, p. 94.

The Cultural Proficiency Continuum

(Handout C)

- **Cultural Destructiveness.** *See the difference, stomp it out.* Negating, disparaging, or purging cultures that are different from your own.
- **Cultural Incapacity.** *See the difference, make it wrong.* Elevating the superiority of you own cultural values and beliefs and suppressing cultures that are different from you own.
- **Cultural Blindness.** *See the difference, act like you don't.* Acting as if the cultural differences you see do not matter, or not recognizing that there are differences **among and between** cultures.
- **Cultural Precompetence.** *See the difference, respond inadequately.* Recognizing that lack of knowledge, experience, and understanding of other cultures limits your ability to effectively interact with them.
- **Cultural Competence.** *See the difference, understand the difference that difference makes.* Interacting with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value their differences.
- **Cultural Proficiency.** *See the difference and respond.* Honoring the differences among cultures, viewing diversity as a benefit, and interacting knowledgeably and respectfully among a variety of cultural groups.



Permission has been requested for reprinting.

From Lindsey, R., Roberts, L., & Campbell-Jones, F. (2005). *The culturally proficient school: An implementation guide for school leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, p. 94.

Cultural Destructiveness

Cultural Incapacity

Cultural Blindness

Cultural Precompetence

Cultural Competence

Cultural Proficiency

Educator Reflection—Mismatches in Cultural Expectations

(Facilitator Notes)

Use this activity to understand and celebrate the differences that may exist among students that reflect their varying cultures.

Directions

1. In a small group, read the vignette (Handout A) and discuss the Questions for Reflection.
2. Review the table titled Individualist Perspective/Collectivist Perspective (Handout B).
3. Talk with your colleagues about the Discussion Questions on Handout A.

Permission has been requested for reprinting.

From The Education Alliance at Brown University. (2002). *The Diversity Kit: An Introductory Resource for Social Change in Education, Part II: Culture*. Providence, RI: Author, p. 25.

Vignette: Mismatches in Cultural Expectations (Handout A)

In a linguistically diverse urban neighborhood, parents (and their preschool children) remained with the elementary school children during the school's morning breakfast program. During that time, the students shared their food with their family members. School administrators and teachers felt that the parents were taking advantage of the subsidized breakfast program. Stating that parents were violating federal and district guidelines, administrators decided to close the school doors to the parents in the mornings. Parents protested the action, and teachers felt that the breakfast incident was another example of the school's failure to foster parental involvement.

Questions for Reflection

1. What beliefs might the parents have had that led to their decision to stay at school to eat breakfast with their children?
2. What beliefs might have guided administrators when they prohibited the parents and siblings from eating breakfast with their school-age children?
3. How did the school personnel and the parents judge each other?
4. How might the situation have been dealt with differently by school personnel taking cultural perspectives into account?

Discussion Questions: Individualist Perspectives Versus Collectivist Perspectives

As you review the table (Handout B) titled Individualist/Collectivist Perspectives . . .

1. What makes sense to you about the expectations in the "Individualist Perspective" column?
2. What makes sense to you about the expectations in the "Collectivist Perspective" column?
3. Elaborate on some of the expectations and explain why you agree or disagree with them as an educator. What factors from your own cultural background might influence your opinions?
4. What kinds of conflicts might occur in a classroom because of these different cultural values? How might you deal with such conflicts? What might you do in your classroom to allow for different cultural values?

Permission has been requested for reprinting.

From The Education Alliance at Brown University. (2002). *The Diversity Kit: An Introductory Resource for Social Change in Education, Part II: Culture*. Providence, RI: Author, p. 26.

Table 3
Individualist/Collectivist Perspectives
(Handout B)

Individualist Perspective	Collectivist Perspective
Student should “achieve her potential” for the sake of self-fulfillment.	Student should “achieve her potential” in order to contribute to the social whole.
Student should work independently and get his own work done. Giving help to others may be considered cheating.	Student should be helpful and cooperate with his peers, giving assistance when needed. Helping is not considered cheating.
Student should be praised frequently. The positive should be emphasized whenever possible.	Student should not be singled out for praise in front of her peers. Positive feedback should be stated in terms of student’s ability to help family or community.
Student should attain intellectual skills in school; education as schooling.	Students should learn appropriate social behaviors and skills as well as intellectual skills; education as upbringing.
Student should engage in discussion and argument in order to learn to think critically (constructivist model).	Students should be quiet and respectful in class because he will learn more this way (transmission model).
Property belongs to individuals, and others must ask to borrow or share it.	Most property is communal and not considered the domain of an individual.
Teacher manages behavior indirectly or emphasizes student self-control.	Teacher has primary authority for managing behavior, but also expects peers to guide each other’s behavior.
Parent is integrally involved with student’s academic progress.	Parent believes that it is teacher’s role to provide academic instruction to student.

Permission for reprinting has been requested.

From The Education Alliance at Brown University. (2002). *The Diversity Kit: An Introductory Resource for Social Change in Education, Part II: Culture*. Providence, RI: Author, p. 25.

Educator Reflection—Power Relationships

(Facilitator Notes)

Social change in education requires us to examine the relationships between individuals and groups. The following activity provides research on this issue and a real-life perspective on how that research plays out. Use it with a group of your colleagues or as an individual reflection to improve your practice.

Directions

1. Read “Historical Power Relations and Their Impact on Development and Learning” (Handout A).
2. Read the vignette “Letter from Kai James” (Handout B).
3. Discuss the questions with your colleagues.
4. How can you use what you have heard to make improvements in your classroom?

Permission for reprinting has been requested.

From The Education Alliance at Brown University. (2002). *The Diversity Kit: An Introductory Resource for Social Change in Education, Part II: Culture*. Providence, RI: Author, p. 29.

Historical Power Relations and Their Impact on Development and Learning (Handout A)

Greenfield et al. (1996) and Bartolomé (1995) draw our attention to another key variable in minority child development and learning: the historical power relationships between dominant and nondominant cultural groups. Frequently, Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans have been touted as “model minorities,” that is, as an undifferentiated group. They have not experienced the widespread school failure commonly observed among Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, African Americans, and American Indians/Alaska Natives. Ogbu (1994) offers a distinction between voluntary and involuntary minorities. Voluntary minorities are those who freely immigrate to the U.S., such as many Asian Americans. Involuntary minorities are those who have been conquered, colonized, or subjugated by the U.S., such as Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, African Americans, and American Indian/Alaska Natives. There is a clear parallel between those groups that are involuntary minorities and resulting school failure. For involuntary minorities, participation in public institutions (like schools) that value the culture of the dominant group may result in further loss of culture, language, and power. Thus, in the case of involuntary minorities, it is of utmost importance to create a climate that values students’ cultures and that follows culturally responsive pedagogy. Villegas (1991) elaborates:

A culturally responsive pedagogy builds on the premise that how people are expected to go about learning may differ across cultures. . . . Cultural differences present both challenges and opportunities for teachers. To maximize learning opportunities, teachers must gain knowledge of the cultures represented in their classrooms, then translate this knowledge into instructional practice. (p. 13)

Bartolomé (1995) proposes that culturally responsive pedagogy alone is not enough to mediate the effect of historical inequity on involuntary minorities. Bartolomé emphasizes that methods by themselves do not suffice to advance the learning of involuntary minorities. She advocates what she calls “humanizing pedagogy,” in which a teacher “values the students’ background knowledge, culture, and life experiences and creates contexts in which power is shared by students and teachers.” This power sharing and valuing of students’ lives and cultures may provide a position counterforce to the negative sociocultural experiences of students; it can enable them to see themselves as empowered within the context of school and allow them to retain pride in their cultural heritages.

Permission for reprinting has been requested.

From The Education Alliance at Brown University. (2002). *The Diversity Kit: An Introductory Resource for Social Change in Education, Part II: Culture*. Providence, RI: Author, p. 27.

Vignette: Letter from Kai James (Handout B)

Kai James was a freshman in high school when he wrote the following letter.

“Dear High School Teacher”

I am a new high school student, and I am looking forward to these next years of my schooling. I feel the need to write this letter because I seek a different experience in high school from that of elementary school. One of the things I would like to see changed is the relationship between students and teachers. I feel that a relationship that places students on the same level as teachers should be established. By this I mean that students’ opinions should be taken serious [sic] and be valued as much as those of teachers, and that together with the teachers we can shape the way we learn and what we learn.

After years of being ignored, what the students need, and in particular what Black students need, is a curriculum that we can relate to and that will interest us. We need appropriate curriculum to motivate us to be the best we can be. We need to be taught to have a voice and have teachers who will listen to us with an open mind and not dismiss our ideas simply because they differ from what they have been told in the past. We need to be made aware of all our options in life. We need to have time to discuss issues of concern to the students as well as the teachers. We must be able to talk about racism without running away from it or disguising the issue. We must also be taught to recognize racism instead of denying it and then referring to those who have recognized it as “paranoid.” We also need to be given the opportunity to influence our education and, in turn, our destinies.

We should also be given the right to assemble and discuss issues without having a teacher present to discourage us from saying what we need to say. Teachers must gain the trust of their students, and students must be given the chance to trust their teachers. We need teachers who will not punish us just because they feel hostile or angry. We need teachers who will allow us to practice our culture without being ridiculed.

Discussion Questions:

- What is Kai James asking teachers to do?
- What do you think James’ experiences as an African American student have been like in school?
- Why do you think changing the power structure of schools is important to him?
- After reading this letter, what new thoughts do you have about cultural identity, development, and learning?

Permission for reprinting has been requested.

From The Education Alliance at Brown University. (2002). *The Diversity Kit: An Introductory Resource for Social Change in Education, Part II: Culture*. Providence, RI: Author, pp. 28-29.

Unpacking the Concept of White Privilege

(Facilitator Notes)

The goal of the following activity is to help participants reflect on how a person's race may impact their life's experiences. The two options for this activity are excerpted from Peggy McIntosh's reflection on this issue. Her essay has been divided into two parts (Handouts A and B). Use one or both readings to help school faculty better understand the concept of White privilege.

Create small groups of three to five people. Provide each person with a copy of the selected reading and instructions for the *Final Word* (see Section I, p. 83). If this is the first time the group has used this process, you will need to review the instructions with the group and monitor groups to ensure they are adhering to the instructions.

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack (Handout A)

“I was taught to see racism only in individual acts of meanness, not in invisible systems conferring dominance on my group.”

Through work to bring materials from women’s studies into the rest of the curriculum, I have often noticed men’s unwillingness to grant that they are over privileged, even though they may grant that women are disadvantaged. They may say they will work to women’s status, in the society, the university, or the curriculum, but they can’t or won’t support the idea of lessening men’s. Denials that amount to taboos surround the subject of advantages that men gain from women’s disadvantages. These denials protect male privilege from being fully acknowledged, lessened, or ended.

Thinking through unacknowledged male privilege as a phenomenon, I realized that, since hierarchies in our society are interlocking, there was most likely a phenomenon of White privilege that was similarly denied and protected. As a White person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something that puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see one of its corollary aspects, White privilege, which puts me at an advantage.

I think Whites are carefully taught not to recognize White privilege, as males are taught not to recognize male privilege. So I have begun in an untutored way to ask what it is like to have White privilege. I have come to see White privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was “meant” to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools, and blank checks.

Describing White privilege makes one newly accountable. As we in women’s studies work to reveal male privilege and ask men to give up some of their power, so one who writes about having White privilege must ask, “having described it, what will I do to lessen or end it?”

After I realized the extent to which men work from a base of unacknowledged privilege, I understood that much of their oppressiveness was unconscious. Then I remembered the frequent charges from women of color that White women whom they encounter are oppressive. I began to understand why we are just seen as oppressive, even when we don’t see ourselves that way. I began to count the ways in which I enjoy unearned skin privilege and have been conditioned into oblivion about its existence.

My schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person, or as a participant in a damaged culture. I was taught to see myself as an individual whose moral state depended on her individual moral will. My schooling followed the pattern my colleague Elizabeth Minnich has pointed out: Whites are taught to think of their lives as morally neutral, normative, and average, and also ideal, so that when we work to benefit others, this is seen as work that will allow “them” to be more like “us.”

Daily Effects of White Privilege

I decided to try to work on myself at least by identifying some of the daily effects of White privilege in my life. I have chosen those conditions that I think in my case attach somewhat more to skin-color privilege than to class, religion, ethnic status, or geographic location, though of course all these other factors are intricately intertwined. As far as I can tell, my African American coworkers, friends, and acquaintances with whom I come into daily or frequent contact in this particular time, place, and time of work cannot count on most of these conditions.

Elusive and Fugitive

I repeatedly forgot each of the realizations on this list until I wrote it down. For me, White privilege has turned out to be an elusive and fugitive subject. The pressure to avoid it is great, for in facing it I must give up the myth of meritocracy. If these things are true, this is not such a free country; one's life is not what one makes it; many doors open for certain people through no virtues of their own.

Permission for reprinting requested.

Excerpt from: McIntosh, P. (1988). *White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies*. Retrieved May 25, 2005, from http://www.campusaction.net/publications/Racism_Study_Circle/White_privilege.htm

White Privilege Descriptors

(Handout B)

1. I can, if I wish, arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
2. I can avoid spending time with people whom I was trained to mistrust and who have learned to mistrust my kind or me.
3. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.
4. I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.
5. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
6. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.
7. When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
8. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.
9. If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on White privilege.
10. I can be pretty sure of having my voice heard in a group in which I am the only member of my race.
11. I can be casual about whether or not to listen to another person's voice in a group in which s/he is the only member of his/her race.
12. I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods which fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair.
13. Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
14. I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.

15. I do not have to educate my children to be aware of systemic racism for their own daily physical protection.
16. I can be pretty sure that my children's teachers and employers will tolerate them if they fit school and workplace norms; my chief worries about them do not concern others' attitudes toward their race.
17. I can talk with my mouth full and not have people put this down to my color.
18. I can swear, or dress in second hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty or the illiteracy of my race.
19. I can speak in public to a powerful male group without putting my race on trial.
20. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
21. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
22. I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.
23. I can criticize our government and talk about how much I fear its policies and behavior without being seen as a cultural outsider.
24. I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to the "person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race.
25. If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.
26. I can easily buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys, and children's magazines featuring people of my race.
27. I can go home from most meetings of organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tied in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance or feared.
28. I can be pretty sure that an argument with a colleague of another race is more likely to jeopardize her/his chances for advancement than to jeopardize mine.
29. I can be pretty sure that if I argue for the promotion of a person of another race, or a program centering on race, this is not likely to cost me heavily within my present setting, even if my colleagues disagree with me.
30. If I declare there is a racial issue at hand, or there isn't a racial issue at hand, my race will lend me more credibility for either position than a person of color will have.

31. I can choose to ignore developments in minority writing and minority activist programs, or disparage them, or learn from them, but in any case, I can find ways to be more or less protected from negative consequences of any of these choices.
32. My culture gives me little fear about ignoring the perspectives and powers of people of other races.
33. I am not made acutely aware that my shape, bearing, or body odor will be taken as a reflection on my race.
34. I can worry about racism without being seen as self-interested or self-seeking.
35. I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having my co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of my race.
36. If my day, week or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it had racial overtones.
37. I can be pretty sure of finding people who would be willing to talk with me and advise me about my next steps, professionally.
38. I can think over many options, social, political, imaginative or professional, without asking whether a person of my race would be accepted or allowed to do what I want to do.
39. I can be late to a meeting without having the lateness reflect on my race.
40. I can choose public accommodation without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.
41. I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me.
42. I can arrange my activities so that I will never have to experience feelings of rejection owing to my race.
43. If I have low credibility as a leader, I can be sure that my race is not the problem.
44. I can easily find academic courses and institutions which give attention only to people of my race.
45. I can expect figurative language and imagery in all of the arts to testify to experiences of my race.
46. I can chose blemish cover or bandages in “flesh” color and have them more or less match my skin.

47. I can travel alone or with my spouse without expecting embarrassment or hostility in those who deal with us.
48. I have no difficulty finding neighborhoods where people approve of our household.
49. My children are given texts and classes which implicitly support our kind of family unit and do not turn them against my choice of domestic partnership.
50. I will feel welcomed and “normal” in the usual walks of public life, institutional and social.

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Excerpt from: McIntosh, P. (1988). *White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies*. Retrieved May 25, 2005, from http://www.campusaction.net/publications/Racism_Study_Circle/White_privilege.htm

Section IV: Principles of Culturally Responsive Instruction

Team members will use the units provided on the accompanying CD as examples as team members are introduced to the principles of culturally responsive instruction. Facilitators will need to see that copies of the appropriate units are available when the team begins to discuss this topic. Additional sources for lessons are included in the resources and activities in this section.

The units are not offered as models of instructional perfection but rather as examples of good instruction designed with the principles of culturally responsive instruction in mind. Facilitators may find that, in the course of examining unit lessons for their cultural responsiveness, teachers find ways to improve some lesson elements. Suggestions for improvements should be encouraged as opportunities for the team to discuss rationales for modifications, while both demonstrating and affirming their own grasp of the principles.

When teachers begin using the units with their classes, other teachers will observe selected lessons and teams will discuss the lessons observed and taught, using the processes for teaching, observing, and discussing the lesson. These processes can be found in Section V.

Resources

Tharp, R.; Hilberg, S.; Dalton, S.; & Teemant, A. (2001). *Teaching Alive for the 21st Century*. Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence.

These four CD-ROMs show master teachers of bilingual and ESL students in all grades using what Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE) identifies as the five principles of effective pedagogy (similar to AEL/Edvantia's principles of culturally responsive instruction). Order CDs from www.calstore.cal.org. Price: \$30 for the set of four.

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (2003). *A Visit to a Motivated Classroom*.

This 35-minute video takes you on an in-depth field trip to a classroom that demonstrates the research-based motivational strategies reflected in *What Works in Schools*. (However, only White students appear in the video.) The videotape is accompanied by a comprehensive *Viewer's Guide*. Purchase from ASCD at <http://shop.ascd.org>. Member price: \$145.

Foundation for the Advancement of Science and Education (FASE). (1993). *Good Morning Miss Toliver*.

Seen on PBS, this 27-minute videotape profiles the teaching of Presidential Awardee Kay Toliver in her 7th-grade math class at East Harlem Tech/P.S. 72. Available from FASE at www.fasenet.org/store/kay_toliver/gmmmt.html. Price: \$24.95.

Lee, E.; Menkart, D.; Okazawa-Rey, M. (Eds.). (1998). *Beyond heroes and holidays: A practical guide to K-12 anti-racist, multicultural education and staff development*. Washington, DC: Network of Educators on the Americas.

This book is a rich collection of personal accounts, short background readings, activities for teachers, and lesson plans across the curriculum and grade levels. Order from www.teachingforchange.org or from NECA, P. O. Box 73038, Washington, DC 20056 (fax: 202-238-0109). Price: \$27

Landsman, J. (2004, November). Confronting the racism of low expectations. *Educational Leadership*, pp. 28-32.

The writer of this article, a teacher-educator at Carleton College in Minnesota and author of *A White Teacher Talks About Race*, describes experiences she has had that reveal low expectations for minority students and poses 12 questions educators should ask themselves to determine whether their schools have high expectations for all students.

Pogrow, S. (2004, October 3). The missing element in reducing the learning gap: Eliminating the 'blank stare.' *Teachers College Record*.

This article's author developed the HOTs (Higher Order Thinking Skills) program in 1981. In this article, he says it takes two and one-half years of systematic effort to teach critical thinking skills to students whose home culture doesn't develop these skills. It can be accessed at <http://www.tcrecord.org/content.asp?contentid=11381>.

Cotton, K. (1990). *Expectations and student outcomes* (School Improvement Research Series Close-up #7). Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Dr. Cotton summarizes the research on the existence and effect of expectations on student achievement. Accessible at www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/4/cu7.html.

Processes and Activities that Link Culture with Instruction

1. Use a think-pair-share activity to generate responses to the question: “How does culture affect teaching and learning?” Allow 3-5 minutes for individual reflection and writing. Then ask teachers to choose someone across the room, walk to that person, and discuss their responses. Allow 5-6 minutes for the pair sharing. When teachers return to their seats, again ask the group for conclusions and record them.
2. Before the meeting, create an outline of key components of culturally responsive teaching in a handout, on transparencies, or on PowerPoint slides. Key points might include the following:
 - Culture is central to learning.
 - Culturally responsive teaching empowers students by valuing their culture and affirming their identity.
 - Culturally responsive curriculum is rigorous and relevant.
 - Teachers set high expectations and provide sufficient opportunities and resources for learning.
 - Teachers make instructional adaptations to match students’ needs and prior experiences.
 - Teachers develop caring, trusting relationships with their students.
3. Prepare a three-column K-W-L chart on chart paper. Use the chart to record from group discussion what group members *know* about culturally responsive teaching and what they *want to learn*. Next, provide copies of the PowerPoint slides to the staff. Discuss the key points; then ask the group to add new *learnings* (column 3) or questions to the K-W-L chart. Alternately, the third column of the chart might be completed at a later date after the staff has the opportunity to learn more about culturally responsive teaching.

How Do We Know If Our Classrooms are Culturally Responsive?

The following activities have been used successfully by teachers and administrators to informally assess the use of culturally responsive instruction in a school.

Video and directed viewing activity. One excellent video for this activity is *Good Morning Miss Toliver* (available from FASE Productions). Kay Toliver teaches mathematics and communication skills in Harlem, where she works with a diverse group of students. Her teaching abilities are acclaimed by her students, former students, and students' parents as well as by many educators who have heard her speak at conferences around the country. In this 28-minute video, viewers observe Miss Toliver and her students in a variety of teaching situations and hear from students and parents about the quality of her teaching.

If time permits, view the entire video. If not, select clips in advance or show the video in more than one session. Ask teachers to form groups of five and provide them with a copy of the checklist for culturally responsive teaching. Assign each group one of the five principles of culturally responsive instruction or ask members of each group to select one of the principles, making sure that all principles are assigned within each group. As teachers view the video or a particular segment, ask them to make note of instructional examples of each principle. When the video is finished, allow time for groups to discuss and summarize their findings. They will then report their findings to the large group. Extend this viewing activity by asking teachers to (1) discuss ways in which Miss Toliver's students are similar to or different from their own or (2) cite examples of culturally responsive teaching they have used or observed in their own school.

Checklist of Culturally Responsive Instruction *(Handout)*

1. High expectations

School staff consistently communicate that they believe in students' ability to succeed.

2. Cultural competence

Educators value students' culture, beliefs, and families and incorporate those in school and classroom practices.

3. Student-controlled discourse

Teachers create classrooms that invite dialogue among students (and between students and teachers). This dialogue forms a basis for instruction.

4. Active teaching

Teachers facilitate learning by engaging students in a variety of activities, including instructional conversations.

5. Relevant curriculum and instructional practices

Teachers develop challenging curricula and instructional practices that are relevant to students' lives.

Group Activity *(Handout)*

Assigned Principle: _____

In your table groups:

- Select a facilitator, recorder, reporter, and timekeeper.
- Review the definition of the principle assigned to your group from AEL/Edvantia's Checklist of Culturally Responsive Instruction.
- Create a representation of the principle of culturally responsive training, using one of the following:
 - Song
 - Picture or diagram
 - Pantomime
 - Skit
 - Other

Be prepared to present your representation to the group.

You have 20 minutes to complete this activity.

Lesson Template Activities

1. This template may provide a totally different vision of lesson planning than some schools are accustomed to using. Work with the principal first to determine what template is being used for planning lessons and if that template may be modified, if necessary, to promote more culturally responsive teaching. Ask teachers where they might need to modify their template to ensure that lessons are culturally responsive. Provide time for a group of teachers to draft a revised or amplified template, if necessary, and share it with staff for their input/approval. If no lesson plan template is used, suggest to the principal and teachers that using the AEL/Edvantia template may help them develop lessons that are more culturally responsive. Share examples of lessons from the units to illustrate how the template is used.
2. Use a video such as *A Visit to a Motivated Classroom*, available from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). As teachers watch the video, ask them to identify what the teacher and students are doing that corresponds to each component of the template.

Lesson Plan Template

(Handout)

Unit Title

Lesson:

Grade(s):

Content areas:

Length of lesson:

Lesson objective/purpose:

Standards:

Resources/materials needed:

Lesson Steps:

Recruit interest in the task (e.g., build on students funds of knowledge).

Communicate expectations—model/demonstrate/display/discuss what constitutes quality work on the task (e.g., provide rubric and involve students in the development of criteria when appropriate).

Explain/clarify the task (e.g., give step-by-step directions).

Provide guided practice and support for struggling students (teaching strategies that differentiate instruction, respond to cultural diversity, keep students on task, and limit frustration).

Provide extension/enrichment/modified activities for special student needs and interests.

Assessment strategies.

**Characteristics of Effective Teachers of
Minority and Disadvantaged Children**

According to research, teachers who effectively educate minority and disadvantaged children hold high expectations and provide support for students’ academic achievement; serve as role models of professionals in speech, dress, and behavior; create classroom cultures that are more like a caring family (e.g., fairness, respect, cooperation); have positive working relationships with families in the community; and take a personal interest in their students’ lives and future. Think about when you have experienced or witnessed examples of this behavior in your school or examples of behavior that is counter to the principle. In the boxes below, record at least two examples and two counter examples of each trait.

Hold high expectations and provide support for students’ academic achievement.

Examples	Counter Examples

Serve as role models of professionals in speech, dress, and behavior.

Examples	Counter Examples

**Create classroom cultures that are more like a caring family
(e.g., fairness, respect, cooperation)**

Examples	Counter Examples

Have positive working relationships with families in the community.

Examples	Counter Examples

Take a personal interest in their students’ lives and future.

Examples	Counter Examples

Reviewing Culturally Responsive Lessons on the Web

1. Read the handout titled “Culturally Responsive Lesson Plans,” which described Web sites offering culturally responsive lesson plans.
2. Visit three Web sites that seem appropriate for your content area.
3. Review lessons, and print one that you would like to use in your classroom.
4. Answer the following questions for each lesson and be prepared to share your findings with your colleagues.

Questions

How can you use or adapt the lesson to fit in the scope and sequence of your curriculum (e.g., when will you teach them, what standards do they address)?

How might you collaborate with another teacher or class during the lessons?

If you do not teach a state-tested content area, how might you reinforce tested standards in the lesson?

Which principle(s) of culturally responsive teaching are most prominent in the lesson?

Using the principles of culturally responsive teaching, rate the lesson as to its cultural responsiveness on a scale of 1 to 10. Talk with your team about your rating and give examples from the lesson to support your rating. Talk about how you might revise the lesson to make it more culturally responsive.

Culturally Responsive Lesson Plans (Handout)

All Content Areas

http://www.teach-nology.com/teachers/lesson_plans

This site contains over 27,000 lesson plans and offers a free subscription to a weekly e-mailed newsletter. You may search by subject to find an appropriate lesson for your classroom. The subjects include, but are not limited to, arts/humanity, physical education, computing, science language arts, social studies, economics, literature, special education, English as a second language, math, vocational education, health, music, and world languages.

http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson307.shtml

This is a multipurpose site for teachers. It contains lesson plans (under subject resources), articles, professional development tips, and message boards. Lesson plans cover all content areas including PE/health, foreign language, technology, and the arts.

<http://thirteen.org/edonline/lessons/index.html>

This site contains lesson plans developed by master teachers around the country. The lessons contain Web-based activities for math, science, social studies, technology, language arts/English, and art.

<http://www.teachers.net/cgi-bin/lessons/sort.cgi>

This site contains over 2,000 lessons in all content areas and allows for a search on lessons with specific topics. The site also contains chat centers/boards, and job postings to assist teachers within the profession.

http://www97.intel.com/education/exemplary_planning/SelectPlans.asp#4

This site contains lesson plans for all major content areas through hyperlinks.

Social Studies/History

<http://amistad.mysticseaport.org/main/welcome.html>

This site allows students to explore the Amistad slave revolt using primary historical documents about the incident along with lesson plans, contextual materials, and teaching ideas.

<http://www.rockhall.com/programs/plans.asp>

This site contains over 75 lesson plans that incorporate rock-and-roll music into teaching the history of the United States. This creative site promotes interdisciplinary learning.

<http://www.exploredc.org/index.php?id>

This site contains lesson plans, timelines, and audio files to explore local, federal, African American, and presidential histories. The site also includes a specialty virtual tours section where students can visit historical sites that are in and near Washington, DC.

<http://memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/ag.html>

This site focuses on history and literature. It contains links to lesson plans that have been provided through the Library of Congress and had descriptions and themes to which each lesson relates.

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/g912.html>

This site focuses on lesson plans that include historical facts and are experiential and activity related. National standards are also here to help with the integration with lessons.

Fine Arts/English**<http://cloudnet.com/~edrbsass/edadolescentlit.htm#multiple>**

This site contains links to lesson plans and resources for adolescent and young adults (grades 7-12); literature, including short stories; mysteries; and English literature.

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2415/>

This site contains lesson plans that incorporate art in the forms of painting, collage, drawing, and rhythm, with language arts.

<http://www.nhptv.org/kn/vs/musla2.htm>

This site focuses on music and the lesson plans show how to integrate language arts, science, and social studies. This site also contains activities and WebQuests for the students.

English/History**<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/yalit.htm>**

This site focuses on English literature and history. It contains links to various types of literature and cultural histories, lesson plans, poetry, and tips for reluctant readers. A must see!

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/mulafro.htm>

The site focuses on African American books for children on social conscience, culture consciousness, melting pot, drama, and poetry. A must for incorporating literature in your classroom.

Math and Science

<http://www.enc.org/features/lessonplans/>

This site focuses on lessons in math and science. It provides articles about educators who use inquiry within lessons, professional development tips, and curriculum resources.

Science

http://www.courttv.com/forensics_curriculum

This site focuses on science. It contains lesson plans that are mystery-oriented in order to develop scientific inquiry skills and to learn about such topics as fingerprinting and DNA.

Science/History/Technology

<http://school.discovery.com>

This site contains lessons that focus on topics in science, history, and technology. It is supplemented by information that has appeared on such television networks as The Learning Channel, The Discovery Channel, and Animal Planet.

Technology

<http://www.glef.org>

This site contains lesson plans that focus on technology integration. It contains case studies, videos, professional development, and a free subscription to *Edutopia* magazine (geared toward how to teach technology within any classroom).

Physical Education

<http://www.pecentral.org/lessonideas/pelessonplans.html>

This site focuses on lesson plans for the physical education classroom. It contains links for health, classroom management tips, best practices, and assessment tools to help teachers in all areas of classroom instruction.

Section V: Lesson Study

This section offers forms and directions facilitators and team members will use to carry out the lesson study process. Handouts explain what teachers and others are to do as they design lessons, teach and observe them, then analyze the results. These tools were designed by the authors to address the particular concerns of culturally responsive instruction. Facilitators may also wish to review forms and processes others have used and do some background reading about lesson study as professional development. Selected articles and Web sites are provided in the resources.

Facilitators who have never before conducted this or a similar process will find that they develop their skills over time. Particularly in meetings to analyze the results of a taught lesson, they may initially find it a struggle to move discussions beyond superficial observations about the activities and materials, to examinations of evidence of student thinking and learning. If at all possible, facilitators should observe one or two taught lessons, using the form team members will use while observing lessons. Until they feel comfortable facilitating analyses of taught lessons, they should also prepare questions in advance that focus discussions away from what teachers did to evidence of students' thinking and outcomes.

Since team members will begin facilitating their own teacher groups in the second semester of this process and will continue into the second year, facilitators should, as soon as possible, begin sharing facilitation responsibilities with team members in order to build their facilitation skills.

Note: Team members will use the lesson plan template to develop lessons. The template can be found in Section IV, p 156.

Resources

The Lesson Research Web site, hosted by Mills College Education Department in Oakland, California, and funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF)
(<http://www.lessonresearch.net>)

The Web site has publications on lesson study, video clips, and ordering information for videos. It also provides links to additional resources.

The Lesson Study Research Group at Teachers College/Columbia University in New York
(<http://www.tc.edu/centers/lessonstudy>)

This site examines how lesson study is practiced in Japan, discusses the effect of teachers' use of lesson study on teaching and learning, and provides lesson study tools.

Lewis, C. (2002). *Lesson Study: Handbook of Teacher-Led Instructional Change*. Philadelphia: Research for Better Schools.

This handbook describes the key ideas underlying lesson study and the practical support needed to make it succeed in any subject area. Available from Research for Better Schools (www.rbs.org). Price: \$24.99

Stewart, R., & Brendefur, J. (2005, May). Fusing lesson study and authentic achievement: A model for teacher collaboration. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 86(9), 681-687.

This article describes some of the features of lesson study that the authors found critical to producing productive discussions and changes in practice.

Activities and Processes

Developing the Lesson (Handout)

For this activity, it would be helpful to have a chalkboard or chart paper available.

Directions for the Person Who Is to Teach the Lesson

1. Come to the meeting with a lesson topic and a day and time prior to the next team meeting when you expect to teach it. The lesson should address curriculum and standards you would normally be teaching at that time. If you have a previously developed lesson to offer for the group's consideration and modification, bring enough copies of it so that no more than two people must share a copy.
2. At the beginning of the meeting, you will identify the concepts and skills (standards) students are to master and describe how the lesson will fit into your instructional sequence. For example, if this lesson is to be part of work concerning a period in history, what is the period? If it is a concept in physical science, what is the concept? What will students have done prior to the lesson, what understandings do you expect they will bring to the lesson, and what will follow it?
3. If you feel it will be helpful, tell the group about any class dynamics that need to be considered in planning activities. For example, do group discussions often turn into arguments? Do an unusually large number of students resist working in teams? Are there cliques who don't get along with one another?
4. During the meeting, group members will suggest activities and resources that you may or may not accept, based on your assessment of your students and your own preferences. The group, including you, will then complete the lesson plan template, using as a base the activities and resources you have accepted. At the end of the meeting, you should have either a completed lesson plan or a plan that is complete enough that it will take little effort to finish the template.
5. It may happen that when you consider the lesson after the meeting, you have second thoughts about the workability of some of the elements. As you prepare to teach the lesson, you may, if you feel it necessary, modify it. However, don't reject strategies simply because you've never before tried them. The purpose of this work is to expand your teaching repertoire. The first time you try something new, there may be rough spots, but you will learn from the experience.

Developing the Lesson

Directions for Team Members

You do not need to have content expertise to be helpful in developing lessons. There are a number of instructional methods that apply across content areas, such as small group activities, journal writing, research, and discussion. You may offer ideas you have used in mathematics, for example, that another teacher might modify for a history lesson. For example, a game to drill on math facts might also be used for recalling history facts.

The purpose of this activity is not to create an unusual lesson plan but to design a plan that will offer solid instruction that is culturally responsive. The person who will teach it will determine which of the suggested approaches is most appropriate for his or her students.

1. Listen to the information provided by the teacher about the content and skills he or she wants students to master in this lesson, how the lesson will fit into the instructional sequence, and whatever else he or she reports.
2. Brainstorm with the group possible strategies, keeping in mind the principles of culturally responsive instruction. The teacher will choose among the brainstormed ideas one or two that seem most appropriate for the class.
3. Designate one team member as notetaker, changing each meeting so that the responsibility does not always fall on the same person. The notetaker will complete the lesson template according to the direction of the group.
4. As a group, complete as much of the template as possible, leaving the last 10 minutes of the meeting to review it for the presence of the principles of culturally responsive instruction. The process of completing the template will require developing specific directions for the lesson activities.
5. Write on the template the name of the teacher who will teach it and the date, time, and place it will be taught. Ask who will be able to observe the lesson, and record their names on the lesson.
6. Finally, make and distribute copies of the template to all team members.

Teaching the Lesson (Handout)

Note: This is an experimental lesson. The goal is not to demonstrate perfection, but to try the lesson out, note its strengths and weaknesses, and learn from the experience. If it is the first time you will use some of the lesson activities, expect that some things will not go as planned.

Before beginning the lesson,

- have copies of the lesson plan available for observers
- explain to the class that the lesson was developed by a group and that some of the group will observe it
- provide name tags to students and ask that they write their first names and last initials on the tags
- arrange space for observers to enter and seat themselves so that they can observe students
- choose three students whom you will particularly notice as you teach the lesson—one who usually performs well, one whose work is average, and one who is normally disengaged

During the lesson,

- notice the amount and quality of the contributions that the three students you identified before the lesson are making to the class. If the lesson achieves its purpose, all three will be engaged and demonstrate a higher quality of work than has been normal for them
- note any surprises that the lesson brings, such as students misunderstanding directions, positive or negative reactions to activities, and difficulties with activities that you expected to go smoothly (or vice versa)

After the lesson,

- ask students to tell you what they thought of the lesson; did anything confuse them? what did they like, dislike?
- set aside any artifacts (written work, sketches, graphs, etc.) from the three identified students to bring to the debriefing meeting; if you feel their work is not representative, bring additional student work to the meeting
- consider what you learned from teaching the lesson—about the lesson activities, about students' responses to them, and about what students learned; complete the reflection section of the lesson template; also note students' assessments of the lesson

Observing the Lesson *(Handout)*

The purpose of the observation is not to determine how faithfully the teacher follows the lesson plan template. It is rather to notice what students are doing and learning as evidenced by whether they use higher-order thinking skills, whether they engage in substantive conversations about the concepts and skills of the lesson, and whether they connect the lesson topic with their knowledge of life outside this classroom.

1. Bring your observation form and extra paper for notetaking. Arrive promptly, get a copy of the lesson plan from the teacher, and take a seat. Your role is to observe, not to assist with or participate in the lesson. Ideally, students will become so involved that they will forget your presence.
2. Choose three students to watch carefully during the lesson period. Try to select a range of students from attentive to disengaged.
3. As the lesson proceeds, jot down evidence of students
 - a. using higher-order thinking skills: comparing, synthesizing, generalizing, explaining, analyzing, interpreting
 - b. engaging in substantive conversations with the teacher and with one another: sharing ideas, asking questions to extend learning, offering explanations, providing examples and details
 - c. connecting class learning to life beyond the classroom: offering personal experience that supports or refutes concepts, applying concepts to real-world situations, or connecting lesson concepts and skills with concepts and skills from other classes

Pay particular attention to the students you have chosen to watch, but you may include other student comments, also.

4. At the end of the lesson, note on the observation form the level of student interest and on-task behavior you have seen.
 - a. Did all, most, half, or less than half of the class appear interested in and involved with the lesson?
 - b. What was the level of interest of the students you chose to watch?
5. Note on the form whether students appeared to master the lesson's objectives.
6. Before leaving, thank the teacher and comment on the strengths you noticed in the lesson and/or in students' work.

Observation Form

(Handout)

Date _____ Course name _____ Lesson name _____

Grade level (and “track,” if any) _____

Estimate class demographics (e.g., 1/3 African American, 2/3 White, mostly girls)

Note evidence of students using higher-order thinking skills.

Note examples of substantive comments and questions.

Note connections students make between lesson content and life outside the classroom.

How many students appeared to master lesson objectives (most all, a majority, about half, less than half, couldn’t tell)?

How many students appeared to be interested and involved (most all, a majority, about half, less than half)?

Debriefing the Lesson *(Handout)*

The purpose of debriefing the lesson is to learn from the experience. Because it is the first time this lesson will have been used, there will no doubt be ways to improve it. At the end of the debriefing meeting, the group will have suggested revisions. The teacher may choose to use the revised lesson with another class, or to repeat it in the next school year. But even if the lesson is not taught again, hearing how students responded to it and modifying it to bring it closer to the desired outcomes will inform teaching in other classes and other content areas.

1. The group reviews the lesson template while the teacher reports any modifications made when she taught it and provides any artifacts collected from students.
2. Using notes taken during the observation, observers describe student participation, reporting actions and words recorded during the observation.
3. The teacher then reports student assessment of the lesson and the reflections recorded at the lesson's conclusion. Finally, the teacher poses a question for the group's consideration. For example:

How can this lesson be changed to help students more easily make connections to life outside the classroom?

What could be done to get students to ask their own questions instead of simply getting the work done as quickly as possible?

How can the directions for small group work be improved so that class time isn't wasted clarifying tasks?

From class participation, I believed that students had mastered the lesson's objectives. But their written work doesn't show mastery. Is the problem in the written assignment I used, or does the lesson need to be strengthened?

How can the questions asked in this lesson be improved so that they challenge students to higher levels of thinking?

4. As the group responds to the question posed by the teacher, the lessons' strengths should be noted before exploring modifications in the lesson.
5. As revisions are suggested, they can be recorded in the appropriate sections of a second lesson template. The original template and template showing revisions can then be kept together, along with observation notes and student work, in a place accessible to team members.